鬼才・伊藤潤二が恐怖の果ての戦き(おのの)を描く、
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眠れる夜の奇妙な話コミックス

新・闇の声 KAIDAN 潰談

伊藤潤二
Junji Ito

朝日ソノラマ

眠れる夜の奇妙な話コミックス
新・闇の声 KAIDAN 潰談
伊藤潤二
朝日ソノラマ

眠れぬ夜の奇妙な話コミックス

新・闇の声 潰談

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New Voices in the Dark
新・闇の声
KAIDAN
怪談
SPLATTER FILM
伊藤潤二
Junji Ito
Translation: Daniel Lau
Editing: nacreid
daniel-lau.com

New Voices in the Dark

SPLATTER FILM

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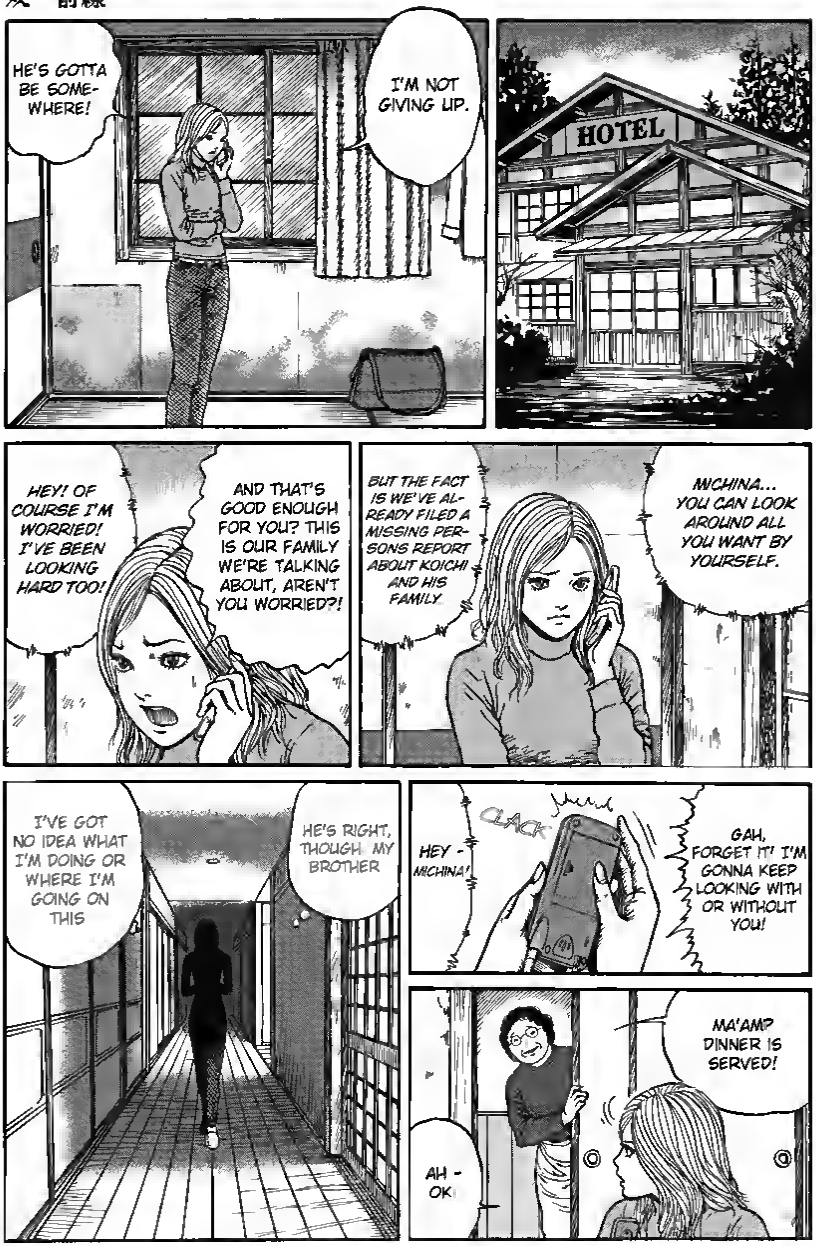
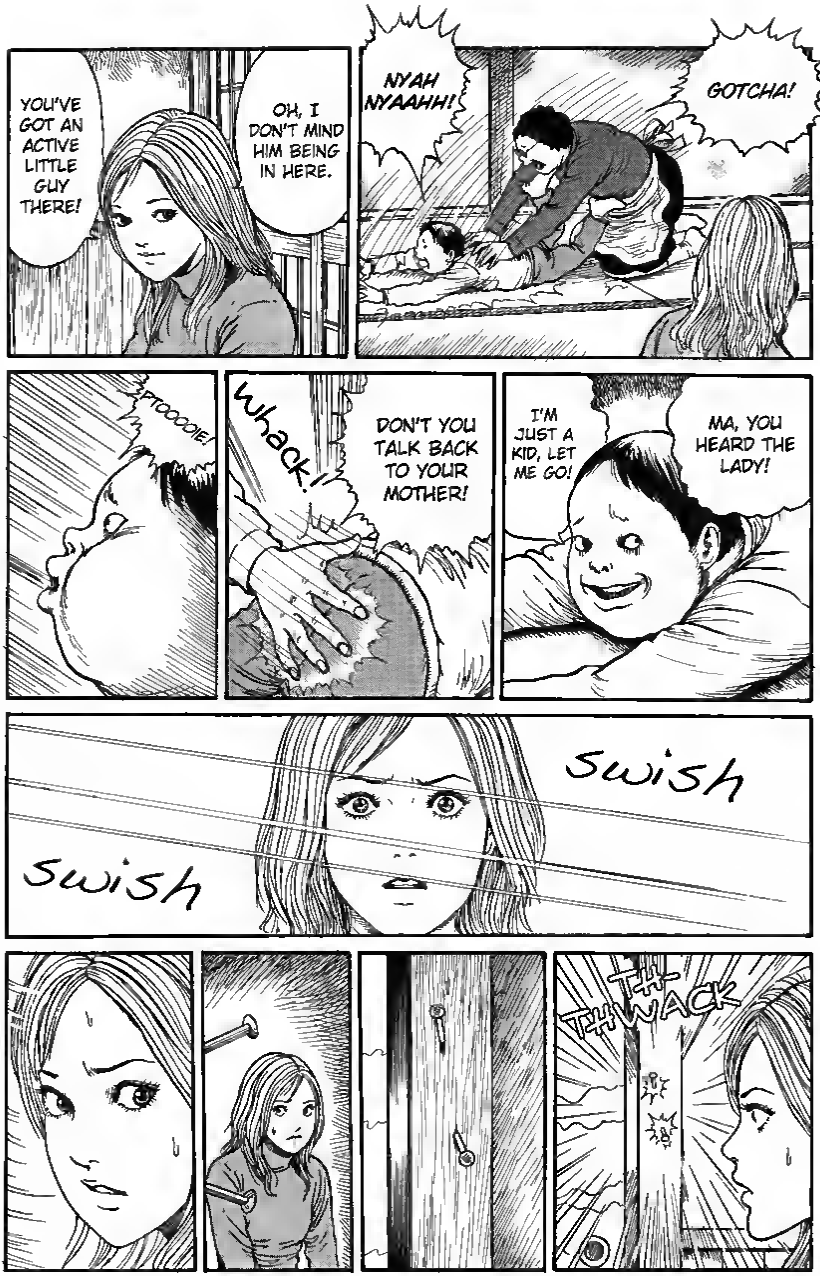
TRANSLATED BY DANIEL LAU
EDITED BY NAEREID
DANIEL-LAU.COM

I've been walking all over Japan for a long time.
It's been ten years already.
EXCUSE ME
IS THERE A 'TSUJII' FAMILY LIVING AROUND THESE PARTS?
AHHH, SORRY.
CAN'T HELP YOU THERE.
HERE'S A PHOTO OF THEM, IT'S AROUND TEN YEARS OLD THOUGH.
I SEE. THANK YOU.
ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER WILD GOOSE CHASE. TIME'S PASSING ME BY.
GOTTA LOOK FOR A PLACE TO STAY ALREADY..

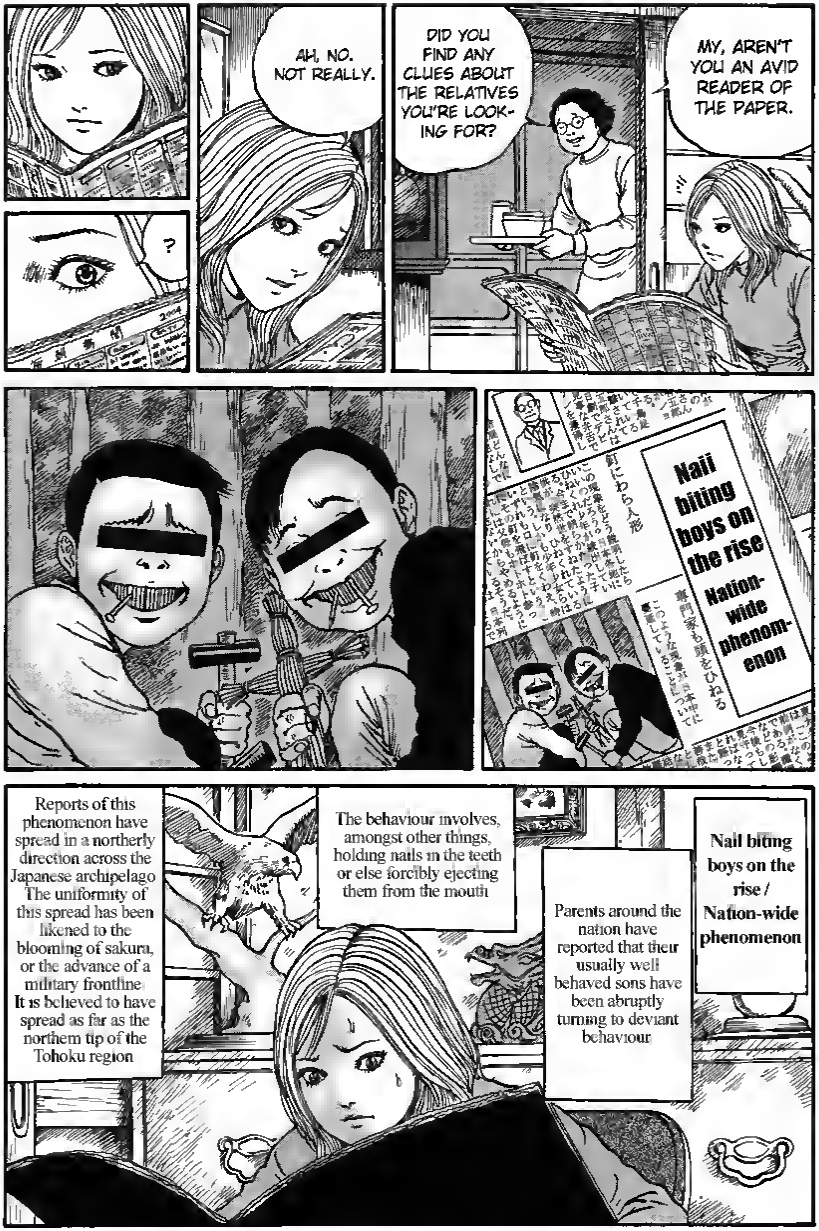

HE'S GOTTA BE SOMEWHERE!
I'M NOT GIVING UP.
HOTEL
HEY! OF COURSE I'M WORRIED! I'VE BEEN LOOKING HARD TOO!
AND THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU? THIS IS OUR FAMILY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, AREN'T YOU WORRIED?!
BUT THE FACT IS WE'VE ALREADY FILED A MISSING PERSONS REPORT ABOUT KOICHI AND HIS FAMILY.
MICHINA... YOU CAN LOOK AROUND ALL YOU WANT BY YOURSELF.
I'VE GOT NO IDEA WHAT I'M DOING OR WHERE I'M GOING ON THIS
HE'S RIGHT, THOUGH. MY BROTHER
CLACK
HEY - MICHINA!
GAH, FORGET IT! I'M GONNA KEEP LOOKING WITH OR WITHOUT YOU!
MA'AM? DINNER IS SERVED!
AH - OK

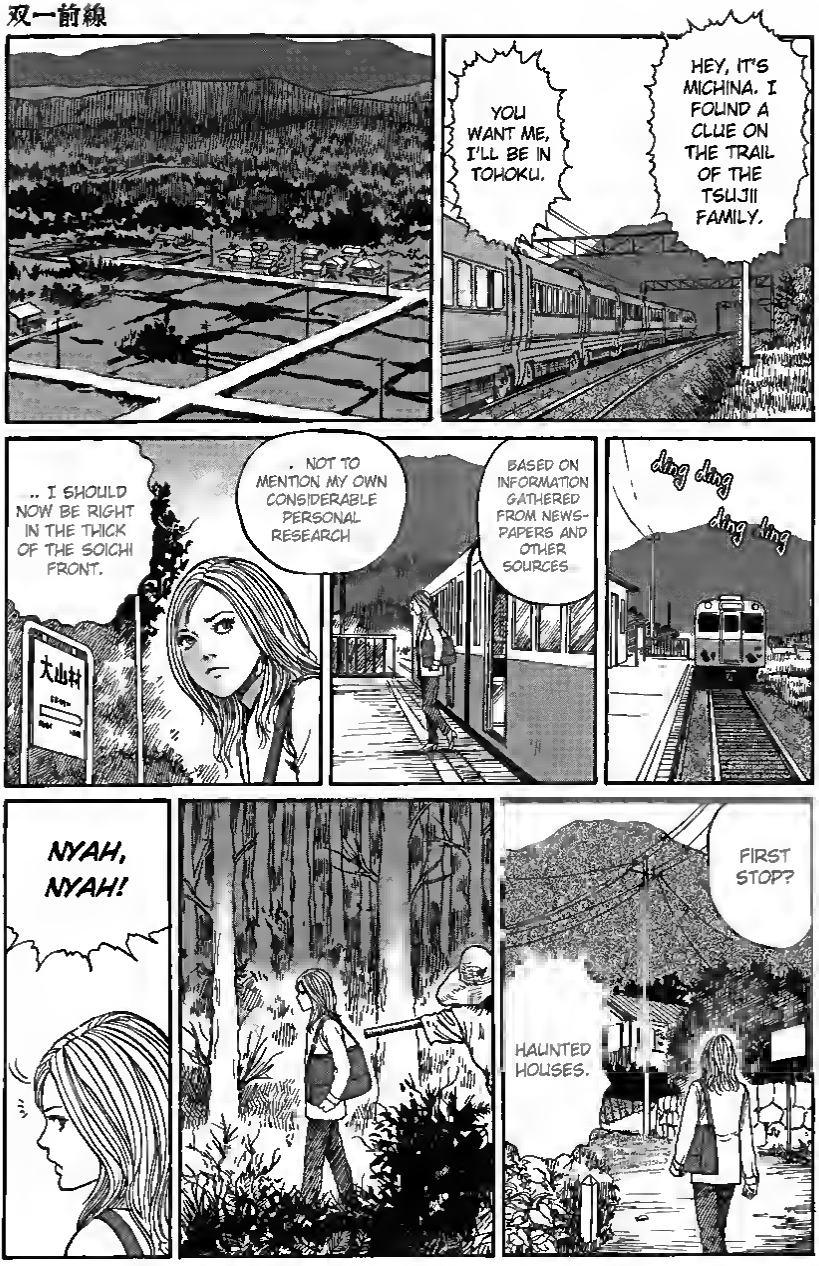
LOOKS GOOD.
NYAH NYAH!
NYAH-NYAH-NYAH!
HEY!
boom boom boom
NYAH NYAH -
HIROSHI! DON'T YOU GO IN THERE -
A HA HA HA!
OUR GUEST IS SITTING DOWN TO EAT!
WHO IS THIS AWFUL BOY AND WHAT'S HE DONE WITH MY HIROSHI?


YOU'VE GOT AN ACTIVE LITTLE GUY THERE!
OH, I DON'T MIND HIM BEING IN HERE.
NYAH NYAAHH!
GOTCHA!
PTOOOOIE!
whack!
DON'T YOU TALK BACK TO YOUR MOTHER!
I'M JUST A KID, LET ME GO!
MA, YOU HEARD THE LADY!
swish
swish
THWACK

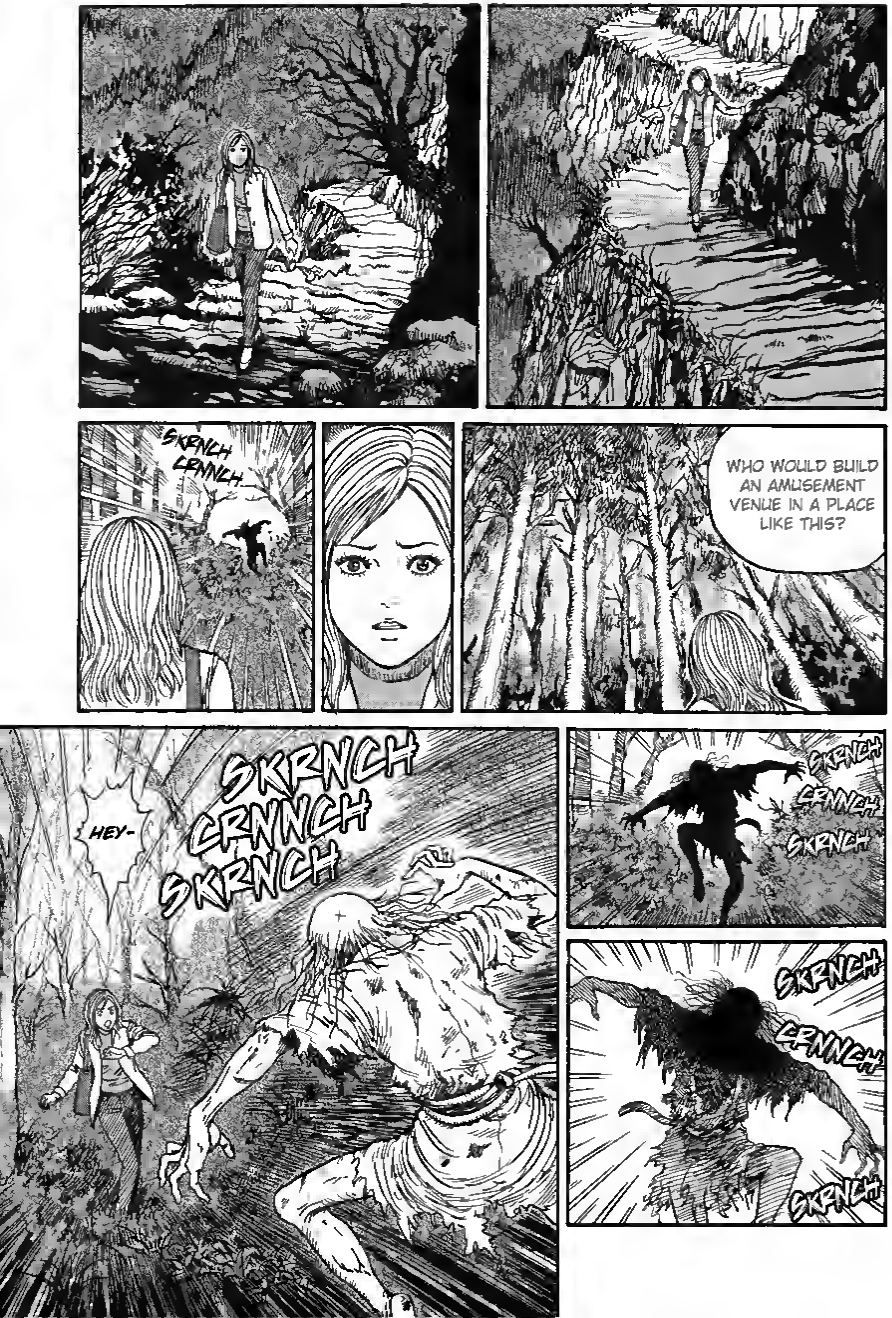
AHHHH! NOT AGAIN, YOU LITTLE BRAT!
GET OVER HERE!
HEE HEE HEE HEE!
NO, I'LL BE FINE ...
DID HE HURT YOU AT ALL?
I'M SO, SO SORRY ABOUT ALL THIS!
HE WAS NEVER LIKE THIS BEFORE!
I'M SO SORRY ...
WERE THOSE ... NAILS?
BUT I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SON, TO TELL THE TRUTH.
HAUNTED HOUSES?
THEY WENT TO SEE AS MANY HAUNTED HOUSES AS THEY COULD.
IT ALL STARTED SOMETIME LAST YEAR... HE WENT ON A TRIP WITH A FRIEND, AND WAS NEVER THE SAME AFTER HE CAME BACK.

DEAD RINGER FOR SOICHI...
THE SMILE ON THAT KID...
AND THOSE NAILS
IT SEEMS THE HAUNTED HOUSE TRIP WAS WHAT DID IT, BUT WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT...
BUT WHY WOULD HIROSHI FOLLOW HIS LEAD?
A DARK, WARPED LITTLE BOY, ALWAYS WITH NAILS IN HIS MOUTH.
SOICHI. THE YOUNGEST OF THE TSUJII FAMILY...
HE SHOULD BE 27 BY NOW.
HOTEL
HOTEL
IF YOU ASK ME, IT'S GOTTA HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE TSUJII FAMILY.


?
AH, NO. NOT REALLY.
DID YOU FIND ANY CLUES ABOUT THE RELATIVES YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
MY, AREN'T YOU AN AVID READER OF THE PAPER.
Nail biting boys on the rise
Nation-wide phenomenon
Reports of this phenomenon have spread in a northerly direction across the Japanese archipelago The uniformity of this spread has been likened to the blooming of sakura, or the advance of a military frontline It is believed to have spread as far as the northern tip of the Tohoku region
The behaviour involves, amongst other things, holding nails in the teeth or else forcibly ejecting them from the mouth
Parents around the nation have reported that their usually well behaved sons have been abruptly turning to deviant behaviour
Nail biting boys on the rise / Nation-wide phenomenon


YOU WANT ME, I'LL BE IN TOHOKU.
HEY, IT'S MICHINA. I FOUND A CLUE ON THE TRAIL OF THE TSUJII FAMILY.
.. I SHOULD NOW BE RIGHT IN THE THICK OF THE SOICHI FRONT.
. NOT TO MENTION MY OWN CONSIDERABLE PERSONAL RESEARCH
BASED ON INFORMATION GATHERED FROM NEWS-PAPERS AND OTHER SOURCES
ding ding ding ding
NYAH, NYAH!
FIRST STOP?
HAUNTED HOUSES.

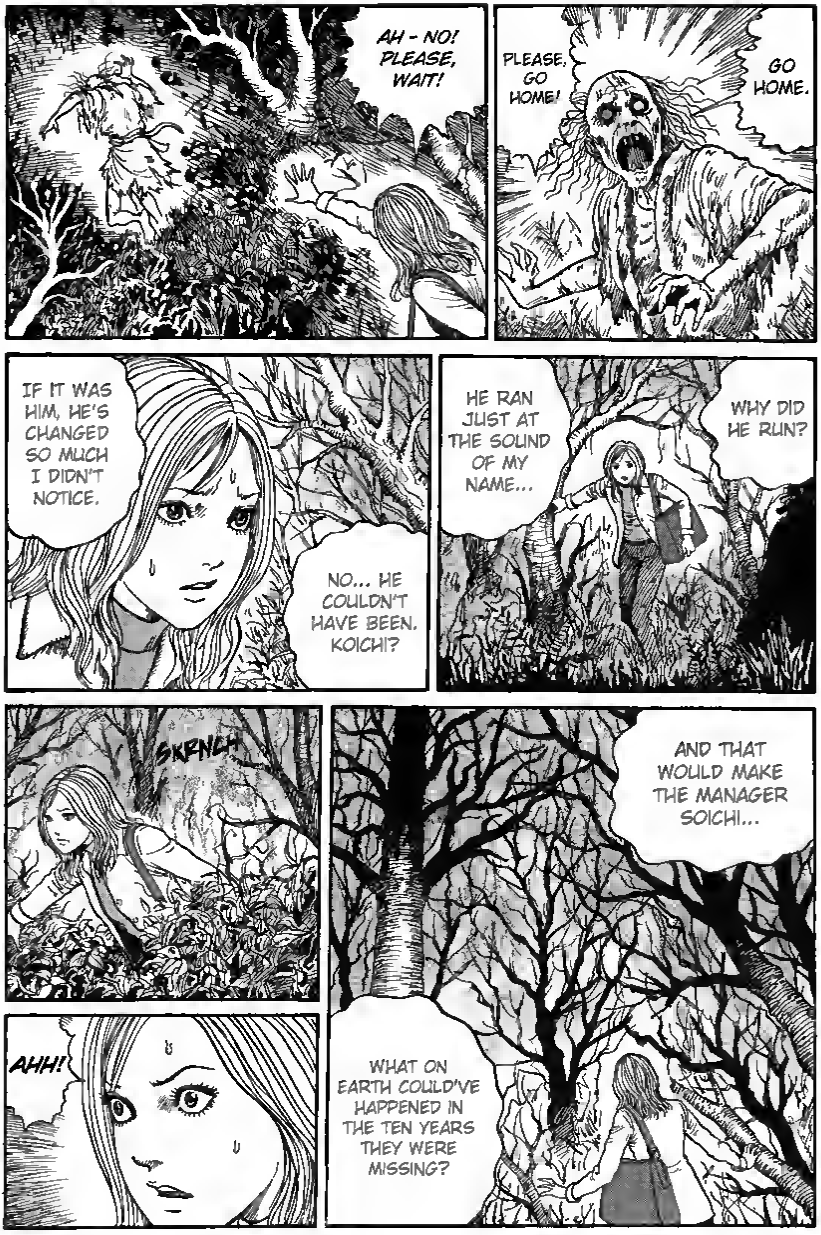
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
HEEHEEHEEHEEHEE!
EXCUSE ME?
UM ...
HAUNTED HOUSES? YEAH, THEY'RE AROUND...
WELL - IF IT'S THOSE YOU'RE AFTER, YOU WANT TO FOLLOW THIS ROAD UP THE MOUNTAIN HERE.


SKRNCH
CRNNCH
WHO WOULD BUILD AN AMUSEMENT VENUE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
HEY-
SKRNCH
CRNNCH
SKRNCH
SKRNCH
CRNNCH
SKRNCH
SKRNCH
CRNNCH
SKRNCH

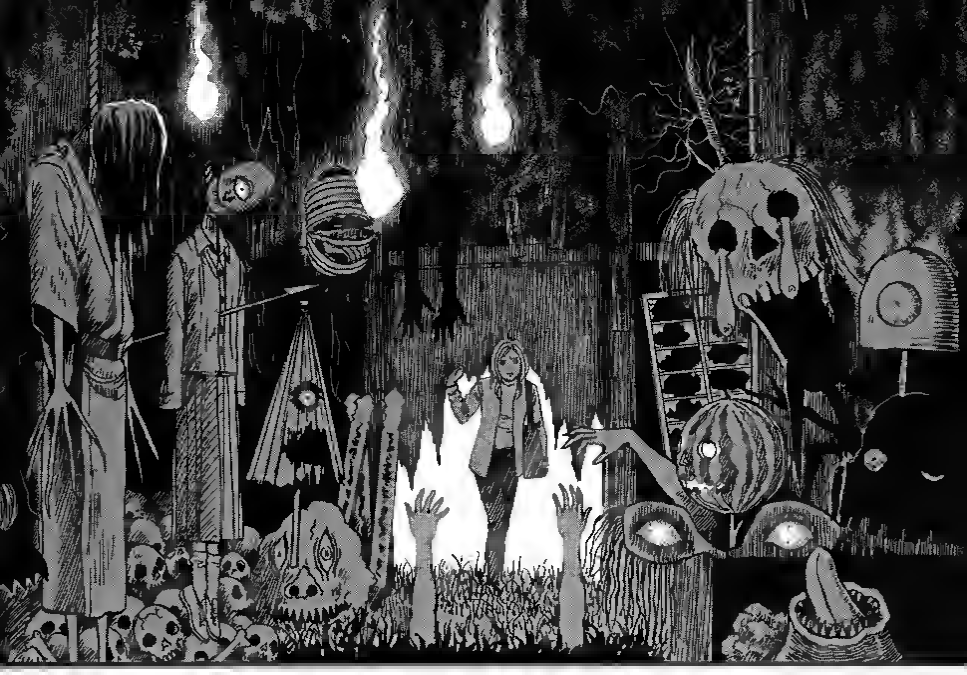
GUH-
AAAAAA
AAAAHHH-
HELP US!
HELP ...

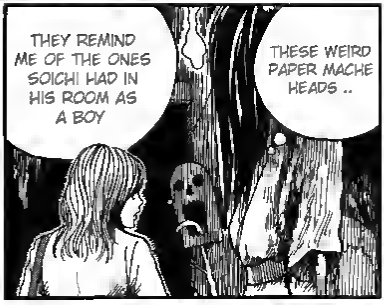
IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE!
...
"HAS"? WHERE ?
... WHAT DO YOU MEAN..
...HE STILL HAS MY FAMILY! PLEASE HELP...
HELP US, PLEASE! I GOT OUT OF THERE, BUT...
THERE! OVER THERE!
THE HAUNTED HOUSE?!
HE'S HOLDING US ALL IN THERE... WE NEED HELP!
IT SCARES ME JUST TO THINK ABOUT IT...
...
JUST WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON IN THERE?
UM.. I SHOULD MENTION THAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR THESE HAUNTED HOUSES
SKRNCH CRNNCH
SKRNCH CRNNCH

LOOKING AFTER THAT THING WAS THE WORST OF ALL...
AND HE'S NOT THE ONLY PROBLEM... HE'S GOT A SON, TOO. A TERRIFYING SON, BORN OF AN INHUMAN MOTHER.
HE CURSED US, PUT US ALL UNDER HIS SPELL SO THAT WE'D WORK FOR HIM.
THE MANAGER IS AN ABSOLUTE MONSTER... HE'S THE ONE WHO DESTROYED MY FAMILY!
...
HE'S MY BROTHER... AND A FRIGHTENING GUY.
THIS MANAGER... JUST WHO IS HE?
I FINALLY MANAGED TO GET OUT OF THERE. BUT NOT BEFORE THE BOY GOT IN A BITE OR TWO. AH, LOOK AT THIS...
HUH?!
...
AHHHHH ...
AH ...
U-UM...
MY NAME IS MICHINA HIROSE.
UM. I'M LOOKING FOR THE TSUJII FAMILY. THEY'RE MY COUSINS.
SKRNCH
CRNNCH


AH - NO! PLEASE, WAIT!
PLEASE, GO HOME!
GO HOME.
IF IT WAS HIM, HE'S CHANGED SO MUCH I DIDN'T NOTICE.
NO... HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN, KOICHI?
HE RAN JUST AT THE SOUND OF MY NAME...
WHY DID HE RUN?
SKRNCH
AHH!
AND THAT WOULD MAKE THE MANAGER SOICHI...
WHAT ON EARTH COULD'VE HAPPENED IN THE TEN YEARS THEY WERE MISSING?

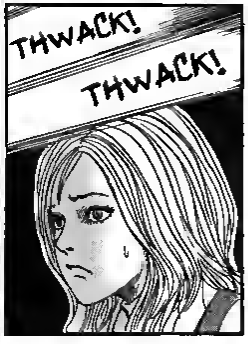
HAUNTED HOUSE
HAUNTED HOUSE
HAUNTED HOUSE




THEY REMIND ME OF THE ONES SOICHI HAD IN HIS ROOM AS A BOY
THESE WEIRD PAPER MACHE HEADS ..

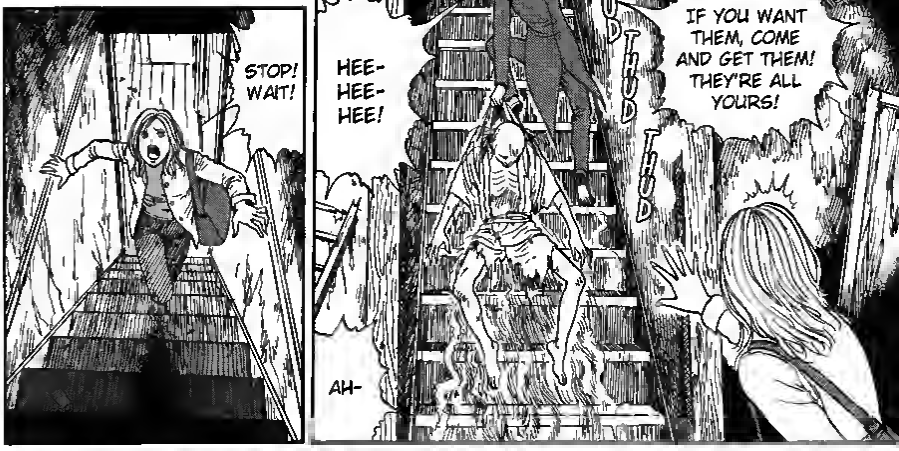
THWACK!
THWACK!
FORGIVE ME, PLEEE-ASE...

EEEEEEE!
THWACK!
THWACK!

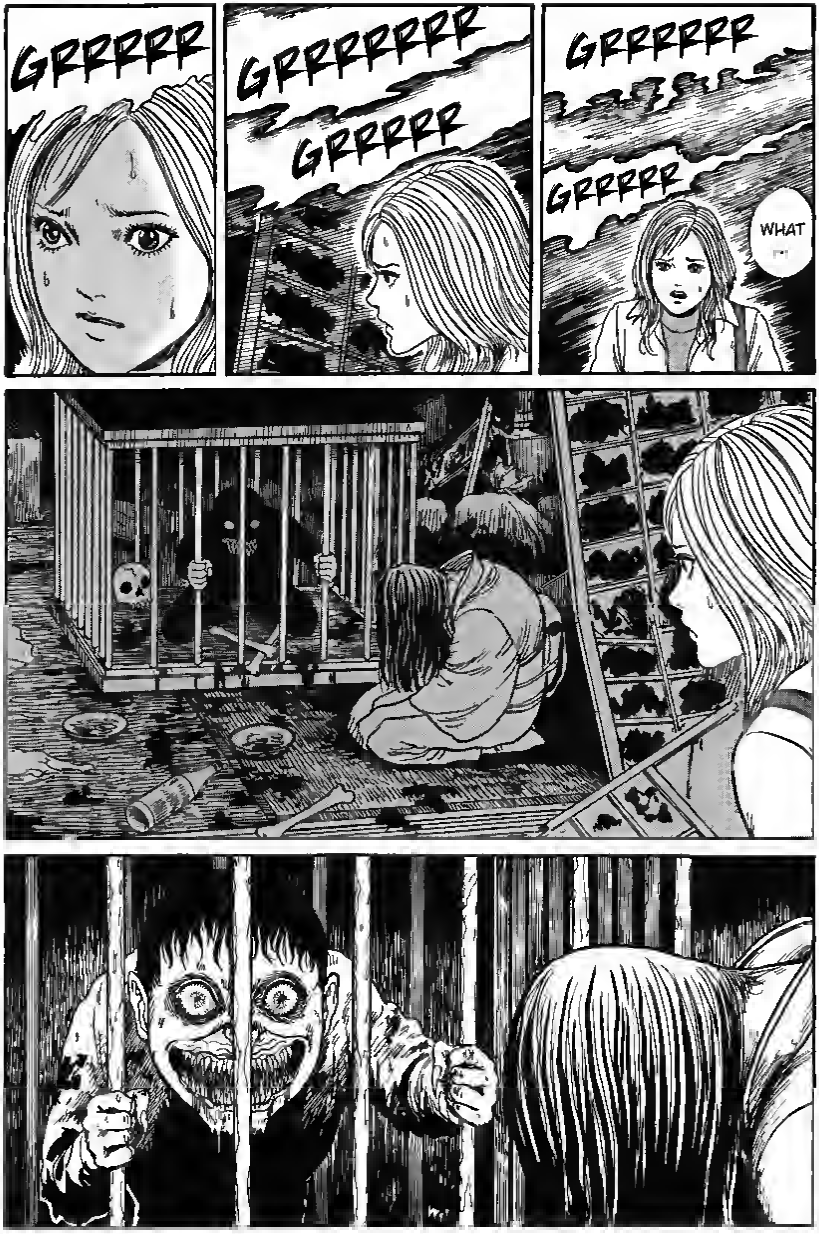

THWACK!
THWACK!

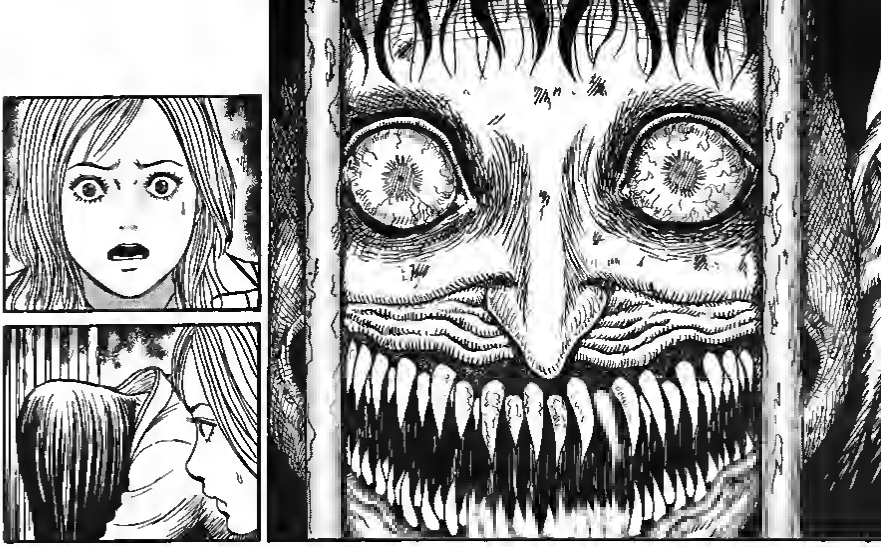
PLEASE, FORGIVE ME!
MASTER SOICHI!!
ESCAPING FROM MY HAUNTED HOUSE - WHY YOU DIRTY, LOW-DOWN, GOOD-FOR-NOTHING.
I SHAN'T, KOICHI.
TH WA CK!
TH WA CK!
TH WA CK!
HEE-HEE-HEE-HEE-HEE!
STOP THAT AT ONCE.

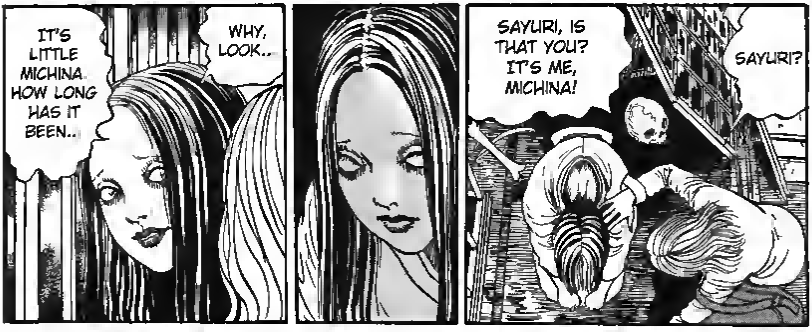
I GUESS THIS IS WHAT PASSES FOR THE CAVALRY IN THIS FAMILY.
YOU'RE MICHINA, AREN'T YOU? I NEVER FORGET A FACE...
...
hee hee
BUT THIS IS JUST WICKED. YOU'VE CROSSED A LINE HERE.
YOU WERE ALWAYS A DISTURBED LITTLE BOY.
WHIPPING YOUR OWN BROTHER - WHAT ARE YOU, INSANE?!
SOICHI, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
I'M HERE FOR KOICHI, AND SAYURI! AND MY UNCLE AND AUNT! YOU LET THEM GO, THIS INSTANT!
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO LISTEN TO YOUR CRAP, SOICHI!
THANKS TO MY HAUNTED HOUSE SETUPS, MY MAGIC HAS BEEN ENSNARING KIDS ALL OVER THE NATION. I'M REALLY VERY INFLUENTIAL NOW!
HMM? IF I COP TO THAT, WILL YOU AT LEAST ACKNOWLEDGE MY CONSIDERABLE MAGIC ABILITY? DIDN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT, YOU KNOW...
HA HA HA.
HUH.

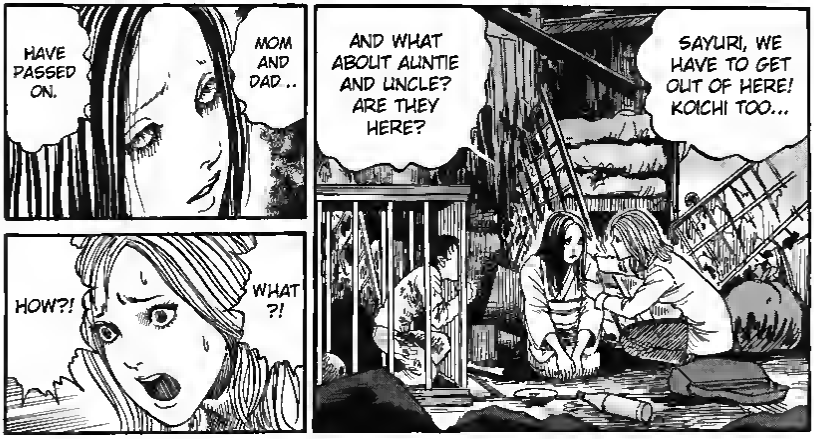

STOP! WAIT!
HEE-HEE-HEE!
THUD THUD THUD
IF YOU WANT THEM, COME AND GET THEM! THEY'RE ALL YOURS!
AH-

KOICHI, WHERE ARE YOU? SAY SOMETHING!
SOICHI! COME OUT AT ONCE!


GRRRRR
GRRRRRRR
GRRRRR
GRRRRRR
GRRRRR
WHAT




IT'S LITTLE MICHINA. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN..
WHY, LOOK..
SAYURI, IS THAT YOU? IT'S ME, MICHINA!
SAYURI?

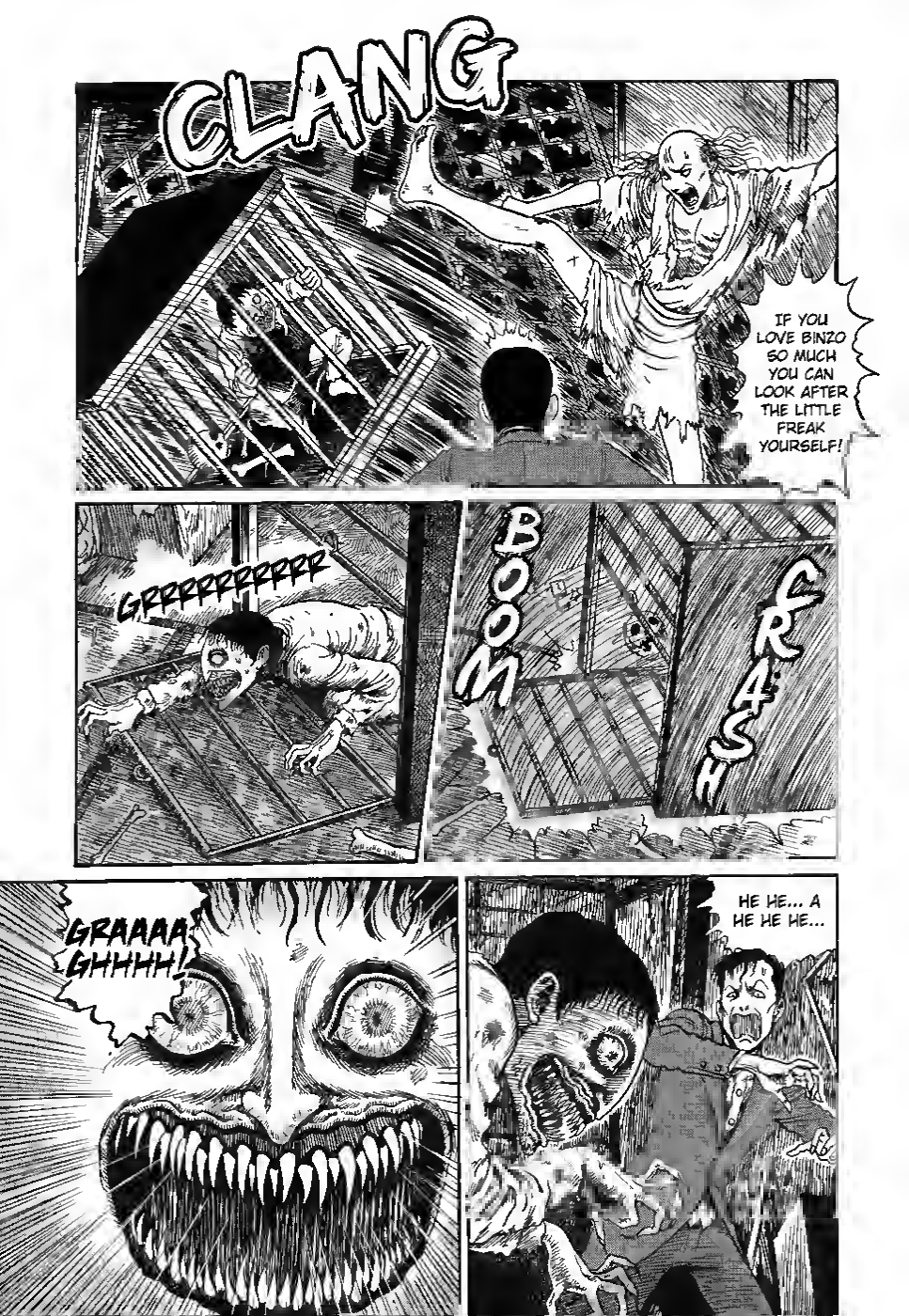

HAVE PASSED ON.
MOM AND DAD..
AND WHAT ABOUT AUNTIE AND UNCLE? ARE THEY HERE?
SAYURI, WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE! KOICHI TOO...
HOW?!
WHAT?!

GRRRRR
HE ATE THE BOTH OF THEM.
IT WAS WHEN THEY WERE LOOKING AFTER THIS ONE.
WHAT THE HELL...!
YOUR GUTS LOOK WARM! GIMME YOUR GUTS!
I'M HUNGRY.
HEH HEH. MY ONLY SON. ISN'T HE JUST TO DIE FOR.
I'LL DO IT RIGHT AFTER I EAT HER GUTS.
COME ON, BINZO. COME ON! SAY HELLO TO YOUR AUNT.
SUITS HIM, EH?
HIS NAME IS BINZO.
WONDER WHO HE GETS IT FROM...
HE'S A SCARY ONE ALL RIGHT.

HURRY UP AND DO IT!
DID YOU NOT HEAR ME?!
KOICHI? THROW HER IN THE BRIG.
ANYWAY, I JUST CAN'T SAY NO TO HIM. YOU DON'T MIND, DO YOU MICHINA?
URGGHHH!
UH -
KOICHI!
UH UH UH ...
UGH!
ACK... KK...
NOOOO OOOO!

UHHH!
A HANDSOME, RELIABLE BOY...
TO WHEN YOU WERE A BOY...
GO BACK ...
KOICHI... STOP...
SUMMER BREAK WITH KOICHI AND THE OTHERS...
I CAN'T EVER FORGET THE TIMES WE SHARED!
YOU GUYS ARE MY FAMILY...
I'VE BEEN ON YOUR TRAIL FOR TEN YEARS...
HE CAN NEVER TAKE THAT AWAY FROM ME!
SO LET GO, KOICHI.. PLEASE..
I REMEMBER EATING WATERMELON AND ICE CREAM...
AND GOING ON THE TRAM-POLINE RIGHT AFTER.
WE'D GO SWIMMING.
AND CHASE EACH OTHER IN THE WOODS.
I SEE IT ALL SO CLEARLY, JUST LIKE IT WAS YESTERDAY.

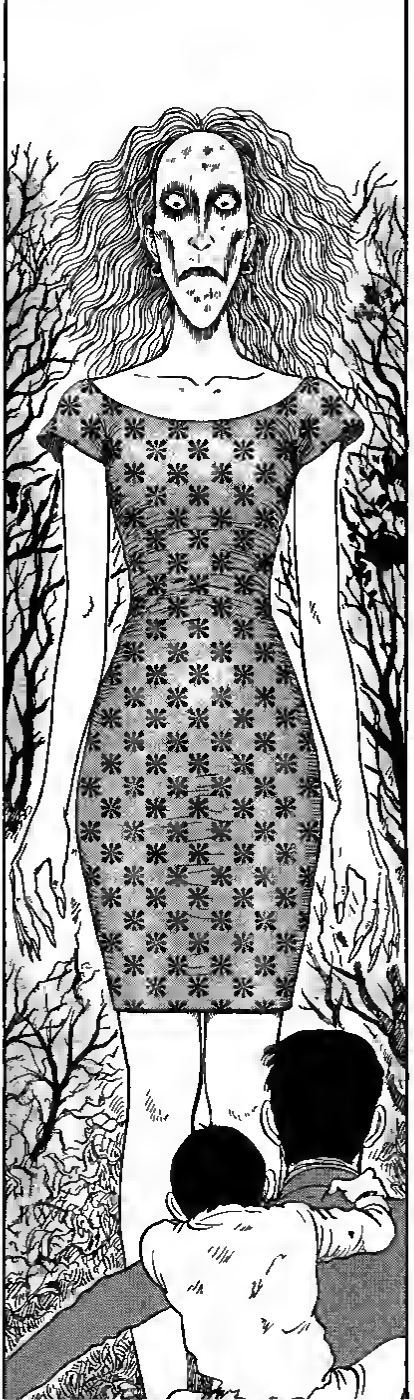
HHHH
HHHH
BE THE MAN YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE!
NEVER, AS LONG AS I LIVE.
SAYURI - HOW ABOUT YOU?
I'LL NEVER FORGET THOSE TIMES EITHER.
MICHINA... I'M SO SORRY. I'M HOPELESS.
HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH?!
SOICHI!
WE'RE NEVER WORKING FOR YOU AGAIN!
DAMN IT, I SEE THE SPELL IS WEARING OFF... I'LL HAVE TO DO IT ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING!
WHAT'S THE DELAY? HURRY AND DISH HER UP!
MOULDY SANDWICH SPOTS ON YOU... YELLOW, RED, GREEN AND BLUE...

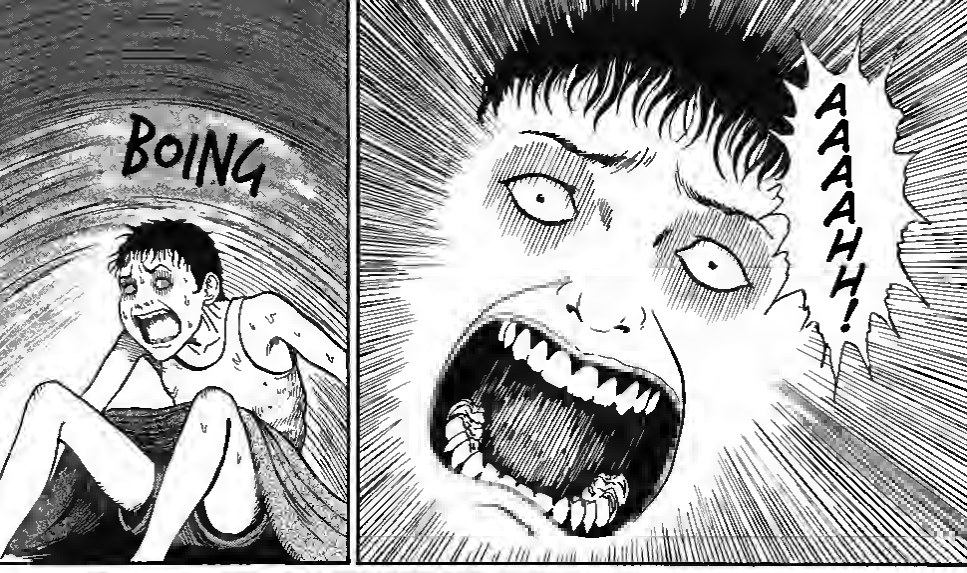

CLANG
IF YOU LOVE BINZO SO MUCH YOU CAN LOOK AFTER THE LITTLE FREAK YOURSELF!
GRRRRRRRRR
BOOM
CRASH
GRAAAAGHHHH!
HE HE... A HE HE HE...

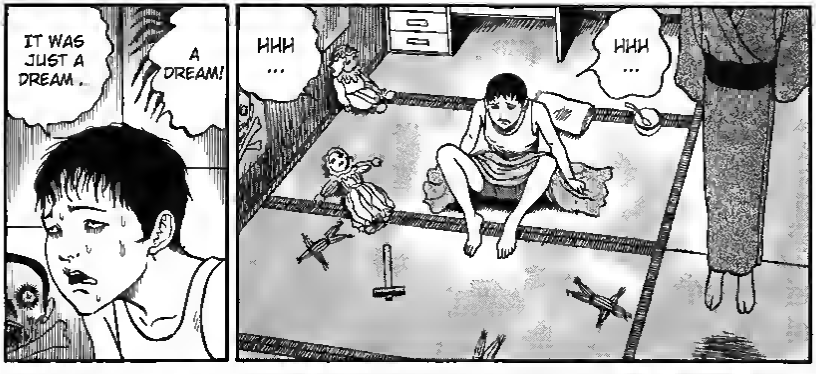
NOM
NOOOOOO!
AAAH HHH!
STOP THAT, I'M YOUR FATHER!
OH-
NOOOOOO!
HAUNTED HOUSE
HAUNTED HOUSE
SKRNCH CRNCH

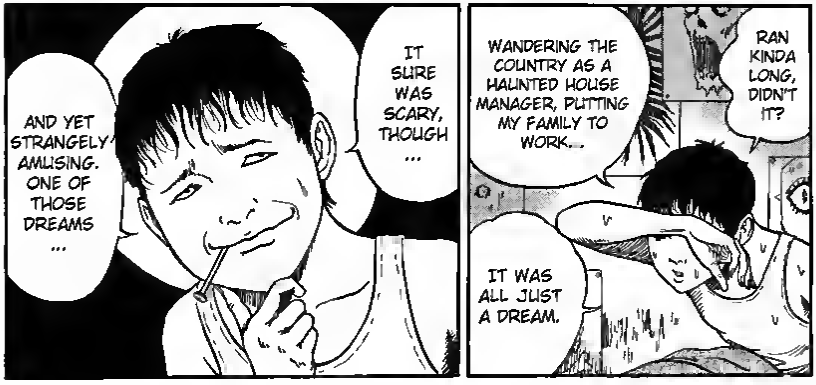
I'VE HAD IT. I THINK IT'S TIME TO EAT YOU.
DEAR... YOU KEEP GETTING AWAY FROM ME.

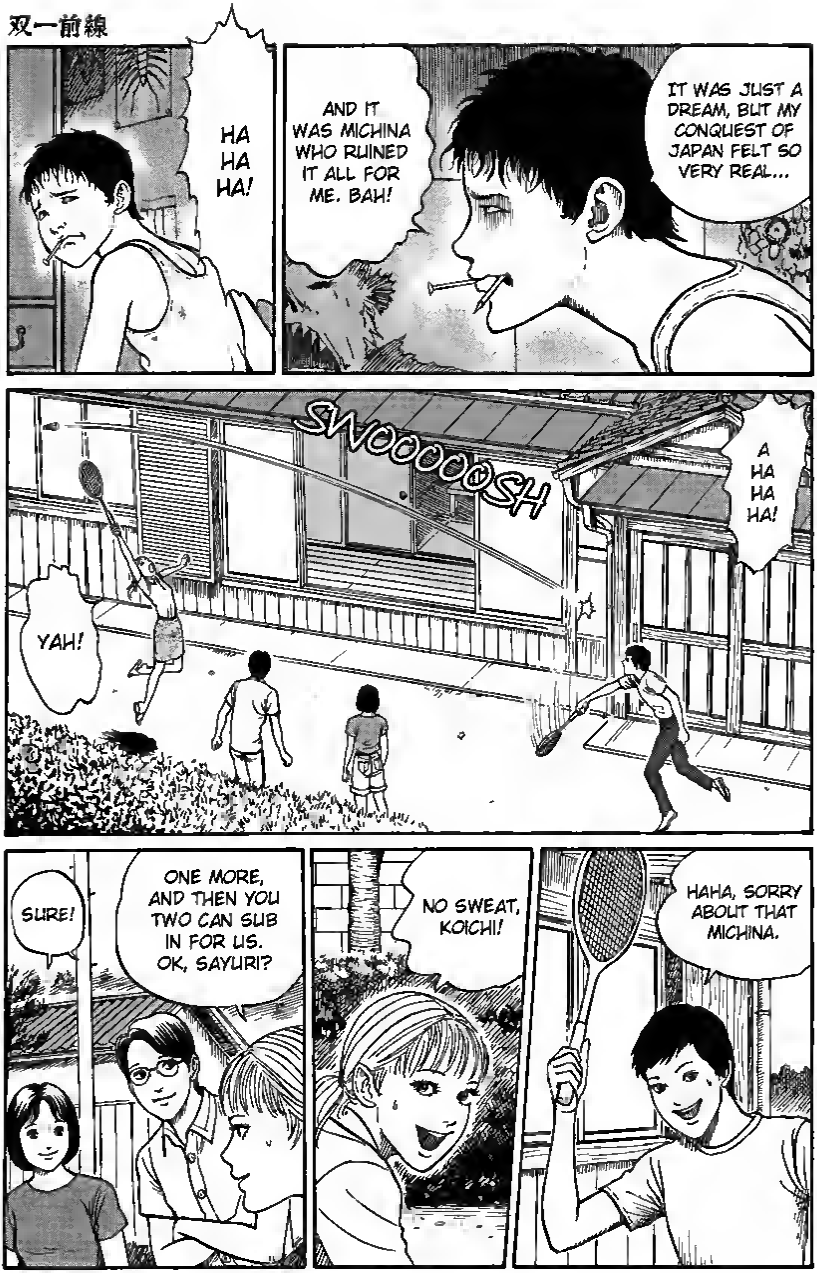
S-SWEETY
HHHHH-

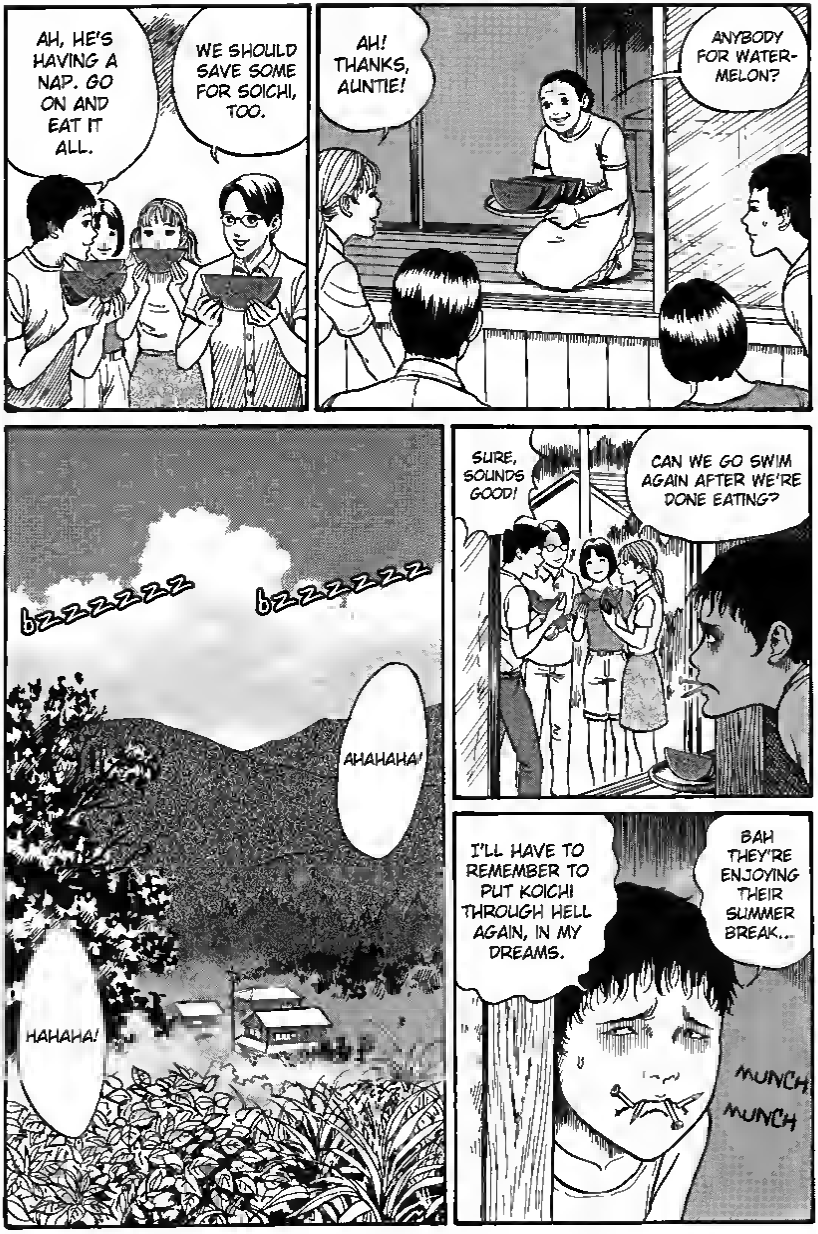



BOING
AAAAHH!


IT WAS JUST A DREAM.
A DREAM!
HHH...
HHH...


AND YET STRANGELY AMUSING. ONE OF THOSE DREAMS...
IT SURE WAS SCARY, THOUGH...
WANDERING THE COUNTRY AS A HAUNTED HOUSE MANAGER, PUTTING MY FAMILY TO WORK...
RAN KINDA LONG, DIDN'T IT?
IT WAS ALL JUST A DREAM.

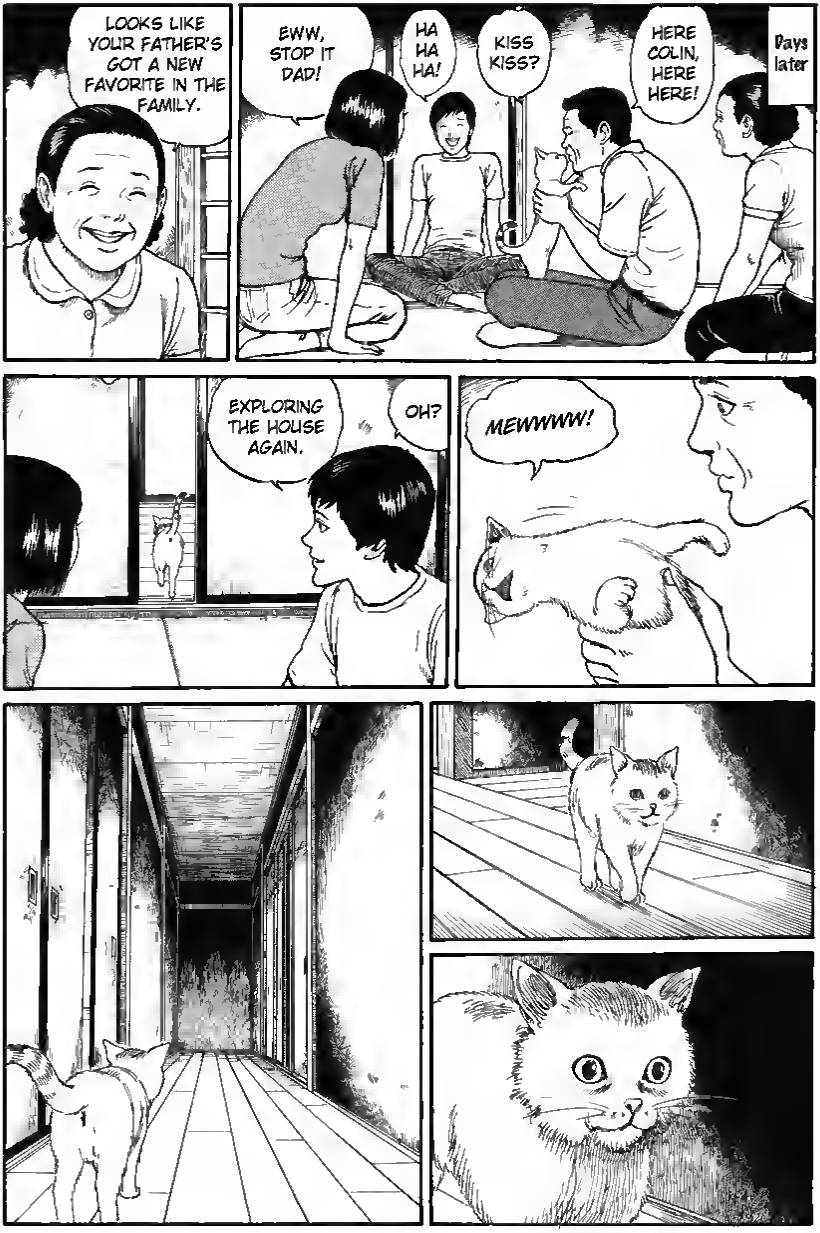

HA HA HA!
AND IT WAS MICHINA WHO RUINED IT ALL FOR ME. BAH!
IT WAS JUST A DREAM, BUT MY CONQUEST OF JAPAN FELT SO VERY REAL...
SWOOOOOSH
YAH!
A HA HA HA!
SURE!
ONE MORE, AND THEN YOU TWO CAN SUB IN FOR US. OK, SAYURI?
NO SWEAT, KOICHI!
HAHA, SORRY ABOUT THAT MICHINA.

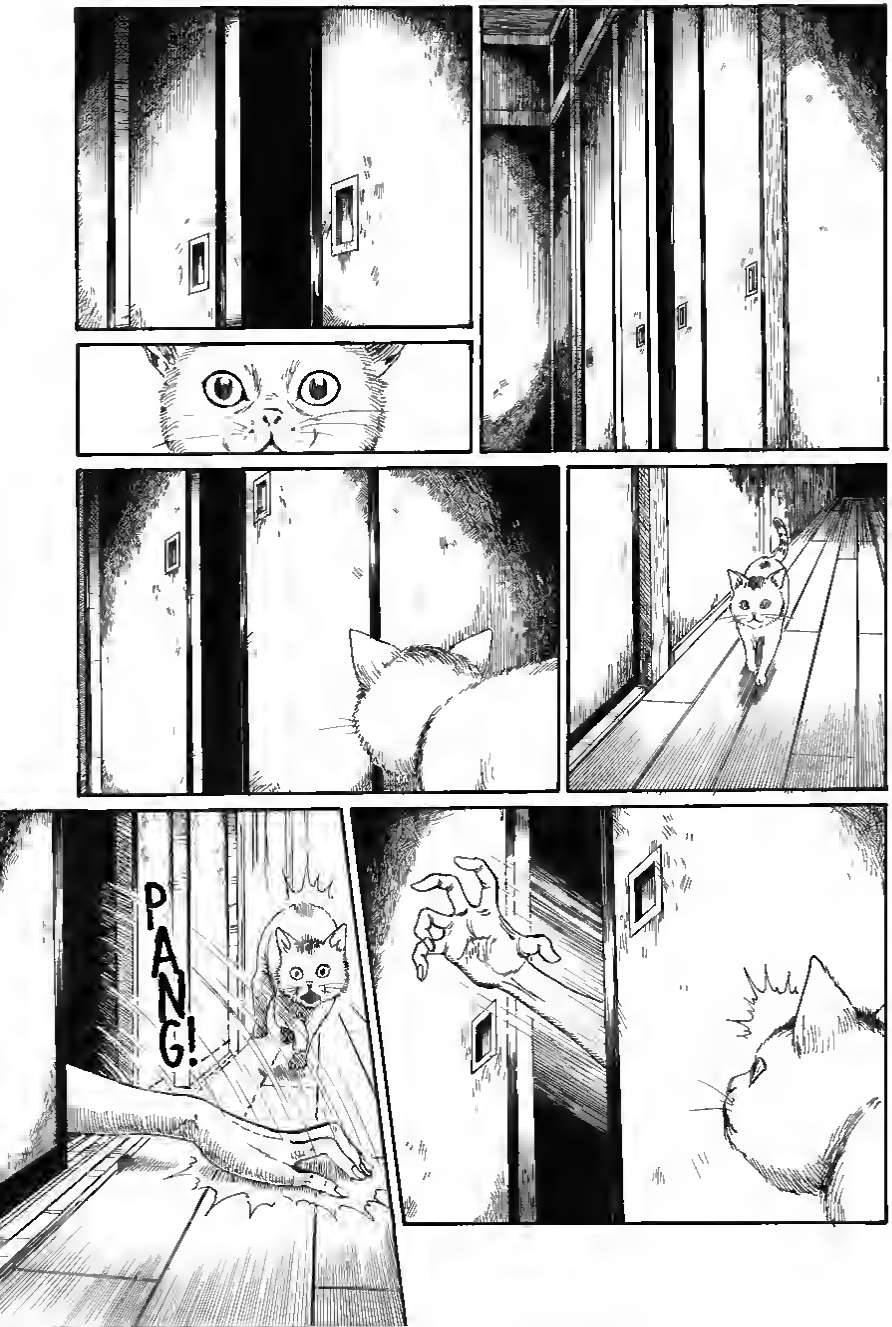

AH, HE'S HAVING A NAP. GO ON AND EAT IT ALL.
WE SHOULD SAVE SOME FOR SOICHI, TOO.
AH! THANKS, AUNTIE!
ANYBODY FOR WATER-MELON?
SURE, SOUNDS GOOD!
CAN WE GO SWIM AGAIN AFTER WE'RE DONE EATING?
I'LL HAVE TO REMEMBER TO PUT KOICHI THROUGH HELL AGAIN, IN MY DREAMS.
BAH THEY'RE ENJOYING THEIR SUMMER BREAK...
MUNCH MUNCH
bzzzzzzz
bzzzzzzz
AHAHAHA!
HAHAHA!
THE END

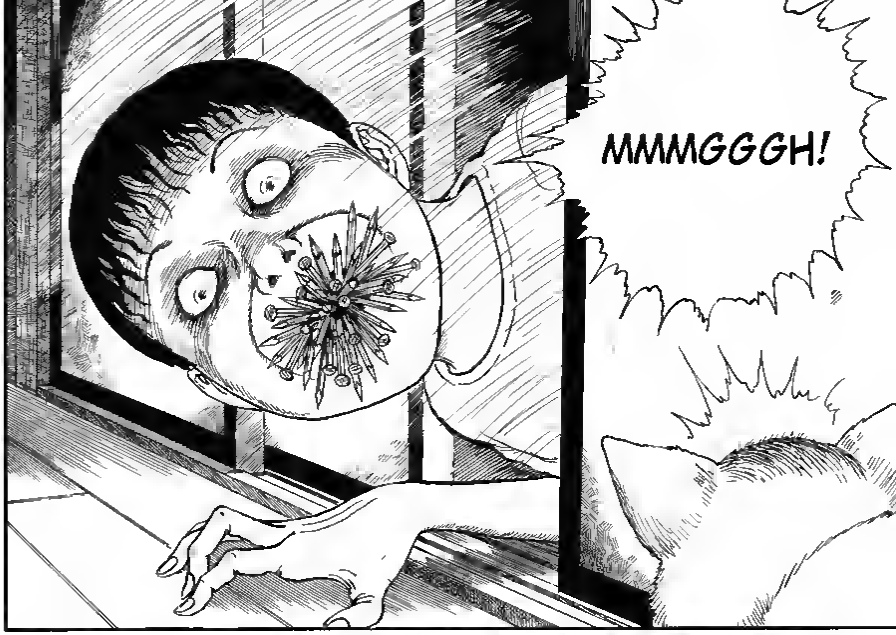
TRANSLATED BY DANIEL LAU
EDITED BY NAEREID
DANIEL-LAU.COM

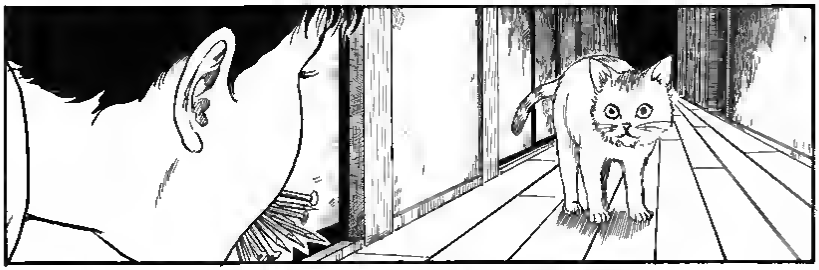
BE SAFE, LITTLE KITTY!
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, HM?
AWWW, LOOK AT THE CUTE KITTY!
MEWWW
MEWWW
...
MEWW
MEWW

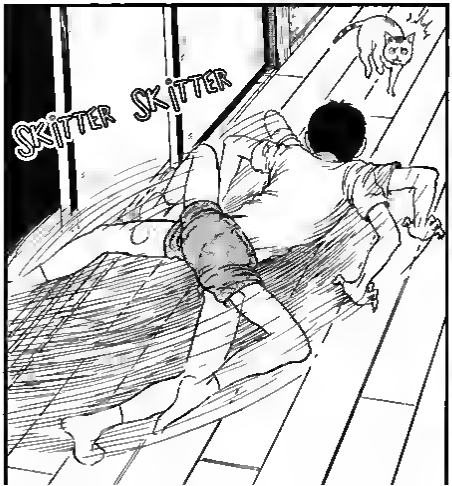
DAD - CAN WE KEEP HIM?
HE FOLLOWED ME HOME.
HI KIDS ... HEY, WHOSE CAT IS THAT?
OH, HEY DAD.
YES!
HAHA!
WE'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM!
WHAT? OH, ALL RIGHT ...
COME ON, IT'LL BE FINE ...
ALL RIGHT - COLIN IT IS!
PURRRR
PURRRR
I WAS THINKING "COLIN".
WHAT SHOULD WE CALL HIM?

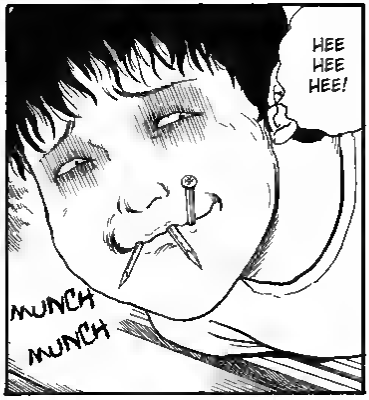

LOOKS LIKE YOUR FATHER'S GOT A NEW FAVORITE IN THE FAMILY.
EWW, STOP IT DAD!
HA HA HA!
KISS KISS?
HERE COLIN, HERE HERE!
Days later
EXPLORING THE HOUSE AGAIN.
OH?
MEWWWW!

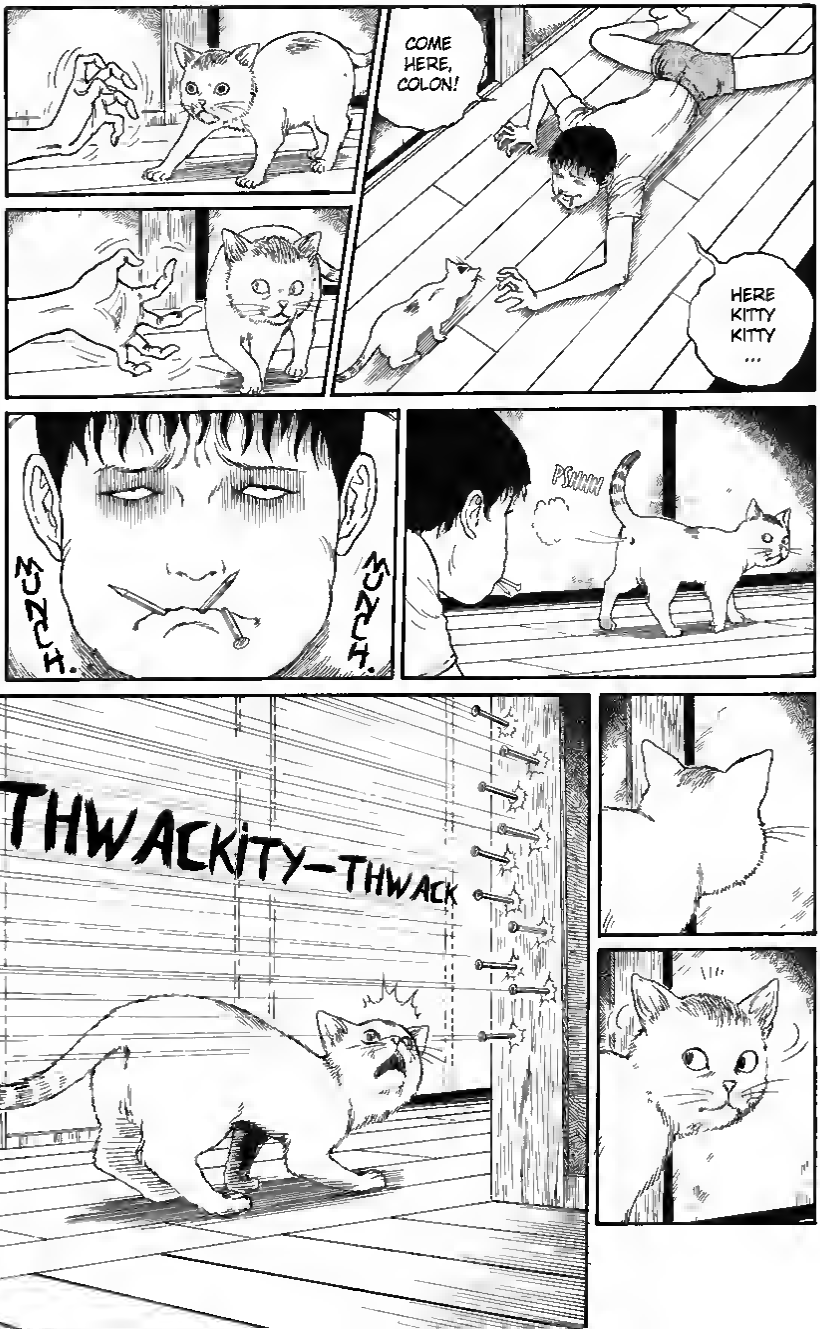

PANG!

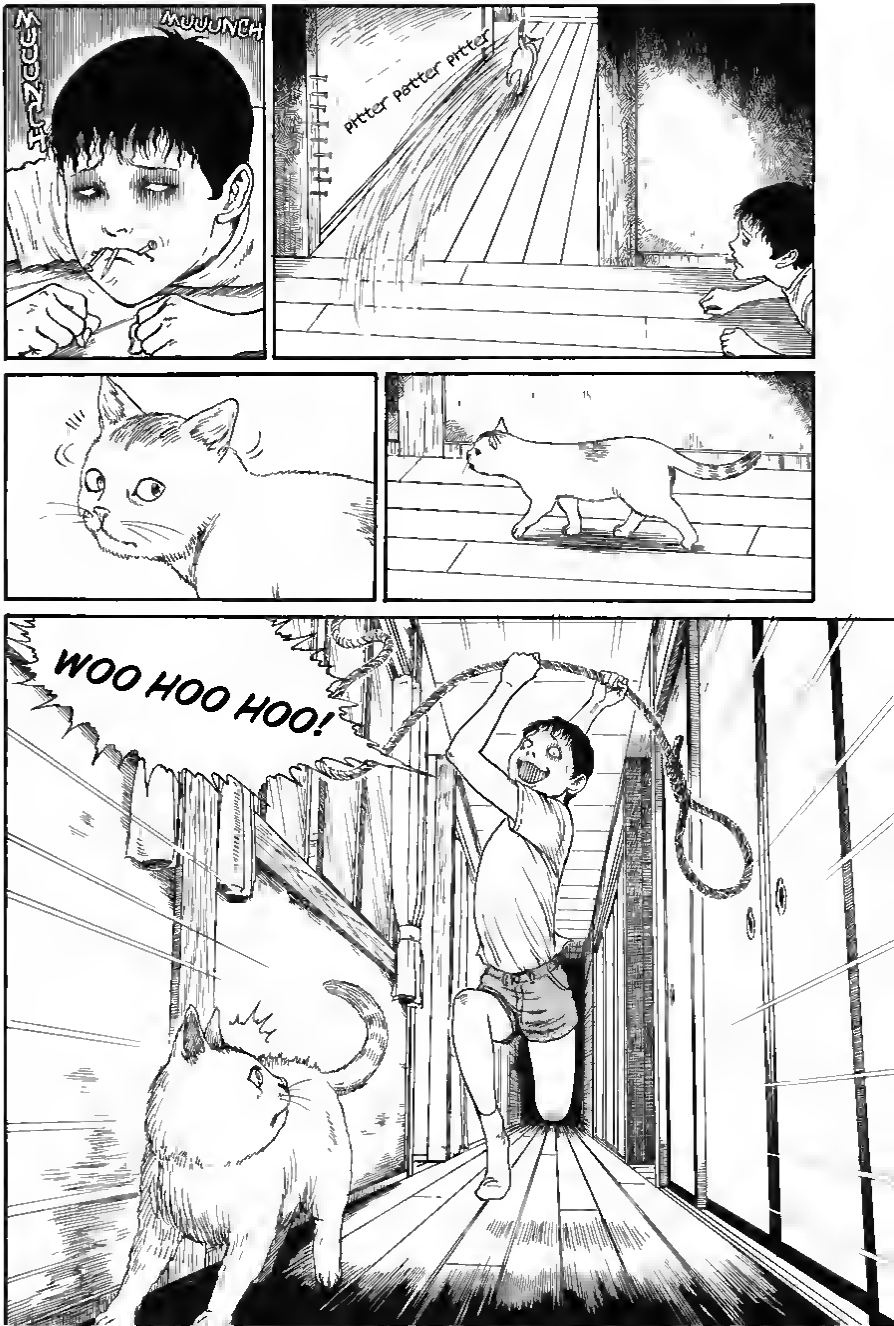

MMMGGGH!




SKITTER SKITTER


HEE HEE HEE!
MUNCH MUNCH


COME HERE, COLON!
HERE KITTY KITTY ...
PSHHH
CRUNCH.
CRUNCH.
THWACKITY-THWACK


MUUNCH
MUUNCH
pitter patter pitter
WOO HOO HOO!

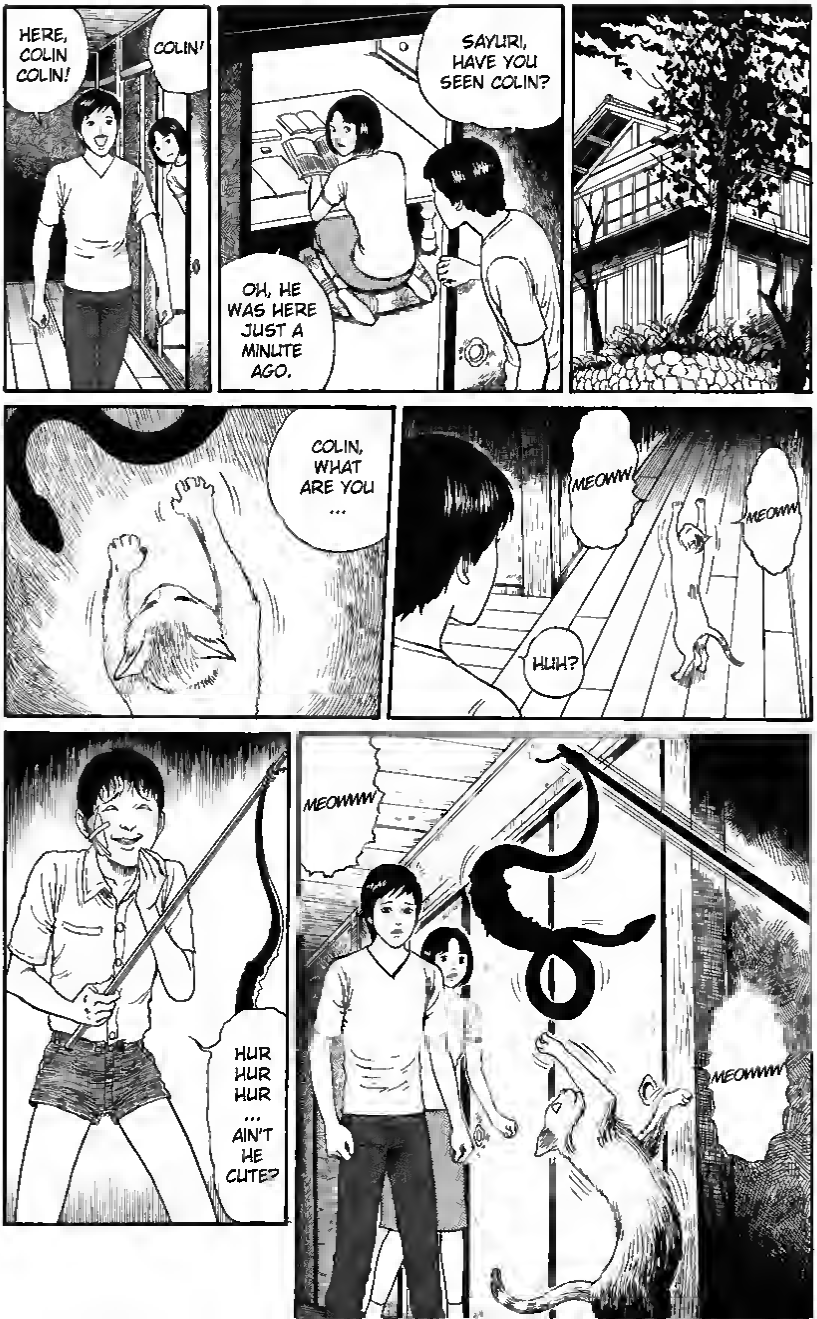
thunk
SWOOO
OOOSH
WHEE HEE HEE HEE!
HOW YOU LIKE THAT, HUH?
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET WHEN YOU MESS WITH -
SOICHI!
SCREE SCREE SCREE

RRREW
DING DING!
CRRRACK
GAH -
snikt
JUSTIFIED SELF DEFENSE.
HE GOT YOU PRETTY BAD THERE, DIDN'T HE?
SNIFF ... SNIFFLE ...
AAAAHH

IS SOICHI SERIOUSLY ALL THERE?!
THIS HAS ME WORRIED, MOM. WHENEVER SOME PSYCHO MAKES THE NEWS, THEY SHOW HIS LIFE STORY AND IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH ANIMAL CRUELTY.
IF I CATCH YOU AGAIN, SOICHI ...
CRUELTY AGAINST POOR DEFENSELESS ANIMALS?
HE'LL BE THE END OF THIS FAMILY!
AT THIS RATE HE'S GONNA GIVE US ALL A BAD NAME WHEN HE GETS OLDER!
COME ON, THAT'S JUST HIS WAY ...
YOU'RE TOO SOFT ON HIM! THAT'S HOW HE GOT LIKE THIS!
HUH ... THANKS FOR THE REMINDER, KOICHI ...
CURSE YOU GOOD
I DON'T THINK I COULD TAKE IT IF HE EVER USED HIS STUPID MAGIC TRICKS ON OUR LITTLE COLIN HERE!
purrrrr
HE CAN'T EVEN BE AROUND ANIMALS WITHOUT HURTING THEM, HOW'S HE GONNA DO ANY BETTER WITH PEOPLE?! IT'S INHUMAN!
HE'S SERIOUSLY SCREWED UP, AND IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING SOON IT'LL BE TOO LATE!

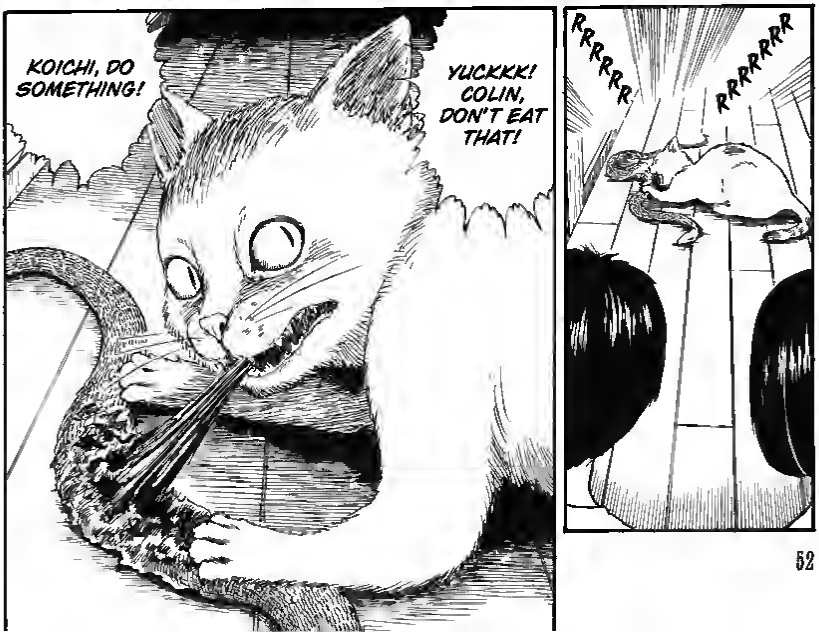
A CURSE ON YOU ALL!
A CURSE ON YOU ...
CURSE YOU GOOD!
CURSE YOU GOOD
OW!
BZZZAP!
OH, ALL RIGHT.
SAYURI, YOU'RE HOGGING HIM!
HEH HEH HAH HAH HAH ...
HM?
WHAT WAS THAT?
I FELT IT TOO JUST BEFORE.
BIT OF STATIC, WASN'T IT?

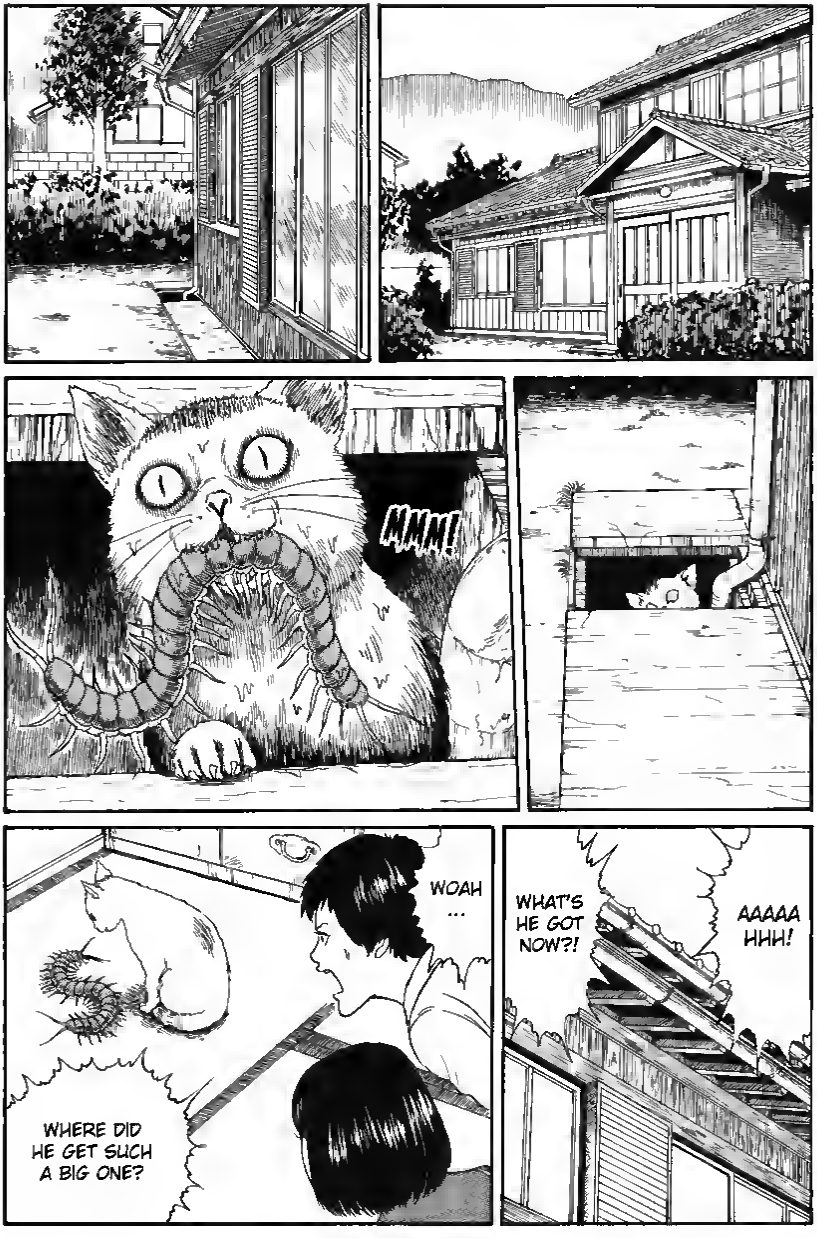
THE CURSE IS ALREADY TAKING HOLD OF YOU!
STATIC?! CRACKS ME UP ...
HUH?
MUNCH
MUNCH
BETTER WATCH OUT, GUYS.
I WAS JUST GETTING WARMED UP!
CURSE YOU GOOD!
HEH HEH HEH, CURSE YOU ...


HERE, COLIN COLIN!
COLIN!
SAYURI, HAVE YOU SEEN COLIN?
OH, HE WAS HERE JUST A MINUTE AGO.
COLIN, WHAT ARE YOU ...
MEOWW!
MEOWW
HUH?
HUR HUR HUR ... AIN'T HE CUTE?
MEOWWW
MEOWWW

KOICHI ... LOOK AT IT ...
AHHH!
OH, IT'S SOICHI ... WHERE'D YOU GET THAT CAT TOY?
IT'S REAL, AND LOOK - IT'S ALL I NEED TO MAKE HIM MINE!
GIVE THE GIRL A PRIZE.
IT'S A DEAD SNAKE!
OH MY GOD, THE SNAKE'S GHOST'LL CURSE YOU FOR THAT!
WHAT?! GO CHUCK IT OUT, YOU LITTLE SHIT!
HEE HEE! THIS GUY? LET HIM TRY!

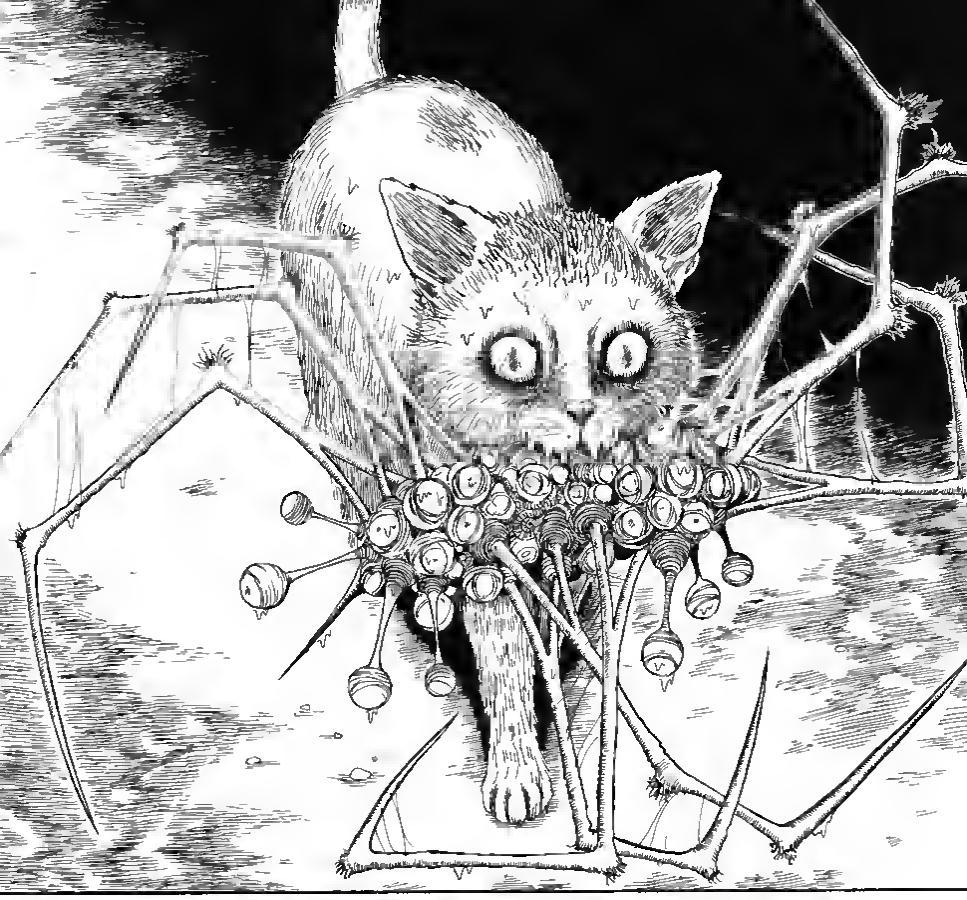
AAAAHHH!
pitter-patter-pitter
RRRRRR
twang!

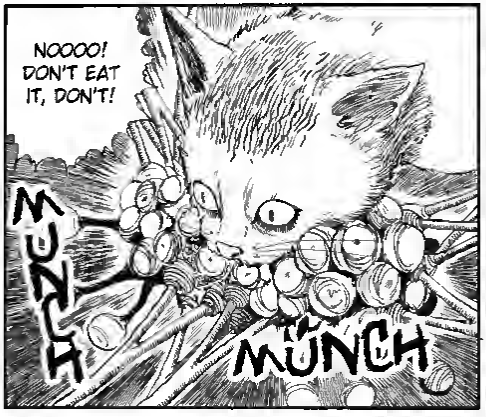

KOICHI, DO SOMETHING!
YUCKKK! COLIN, DON'T EAT THAT!
RRRRRR
RRRRRRR


MMM!
WOAH ...
WHERE DID HE GET SUCH A BIG ONE?
WHAT'S HE GOT NOW?!
AAAAA HHH!

WE GOTTA ACCEPT IT.
BUT LOOK ... HE'S A CAT. IT'S IN HIS NATURE, SAYURI.
HE'S BEEN SO CREEPY LATELY ... WHAT HAPPENED?!
MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH
MAYBE ...
MAY-
The next day
COLIN, NOOOOO!
RRRRRRRIP
RRRRRRRIP
STOP THAT RIGHT NOW!

I GUESS THIS IS WHAT CATS DO ... THERE'S NOT A WALL IN THE HOUSE HE HASN'T RUINED.
OH, COLIN ...
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
LOOKS LIKE THEY CAN STAND A LITTLE MORE, THEN.
IT'S ALL ME, AND THEY'VE GOT NO IDEA!
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE GOT LIKE THIS SO QUICK ...
THERE - LOOK!
WHAT? WHERE IS HE?
COLIN'S GOT SOMETHING GROSS AGAIN!
AAAAAH-HHH!



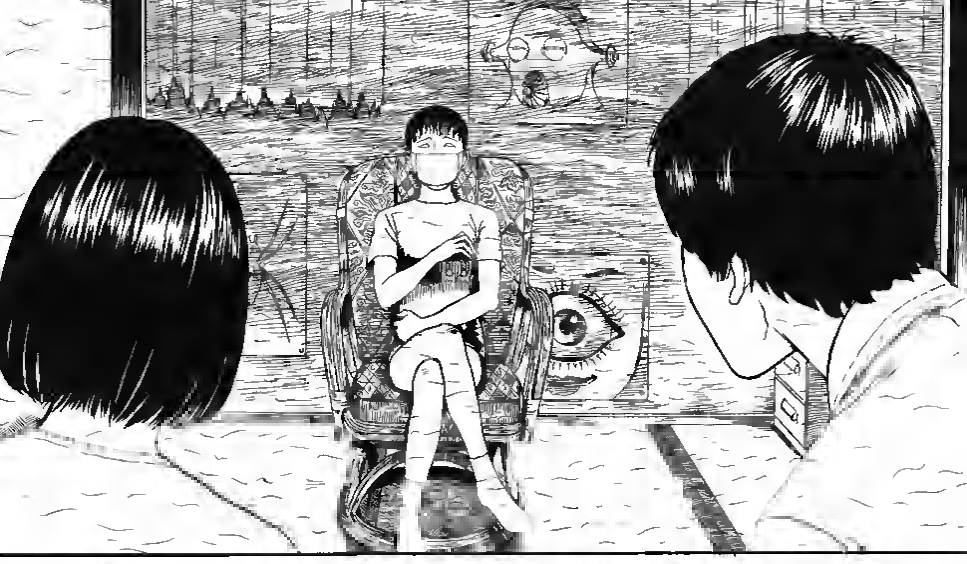

NOOOO! DON'T EAT IT, DON'T!
MUNCH
MUNCH

COLIN! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT THING?!

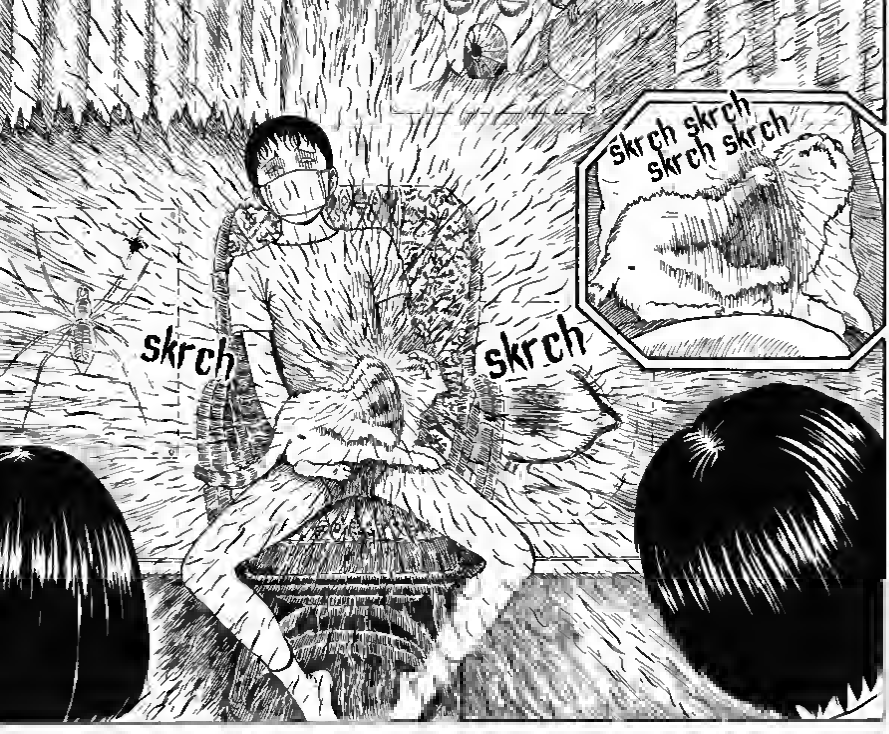
NEXT TIME YOU SWING BY HELL, BRING ME BACK SOMETHING ALIVE!
I'M STARTING TO LIKE YOU, COLON!
THIS FELLA HAS GOTTA BE STRAIGHT OUTTA HELL ITSELF ...
G-GOOD BOY, COLON!
PURRR HUR HUR HUR
NICE KITTY, NIIIICE ...
MUNCH MUNCH
AND IT'S NOT COLON, IT'S COLIN!
YOU'RE SUCH A FREAK! IT'S GOTTA BE FROM OVERSEAS ... THE GOVERNMENT INTRODUCED SOME FOREIGN INSECTS INTO THE ECOSYSTEM!
MY CURSE IS FINALLY TAKING SHAPE.
HEH HEH HEH .. HERE IT IS.
tap tap tap
COLIN! COME ON.

AND GO HUNTING FOR CREEPY CRAWLIES.
IT'S SO COLIN CAN'T GET OUT.
THE HOUSE IS ALL BOARDED UP!
HEY ...
I DON'T GET IT. HE RIPS UP THE DOORS AND WINDOWS SO YOU'RE LOCKING HIM IN?
WELL IF WE OPEN A WINDOW HE'LL BE GONE!
BUT THE AIR IN HERE'S FILTHY!
ER ...
...
BETTER CLEAN OUT THE LITTER, THEN.
SMELLS LIKE COLIN'S BUSINESS.
WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
... HEY.

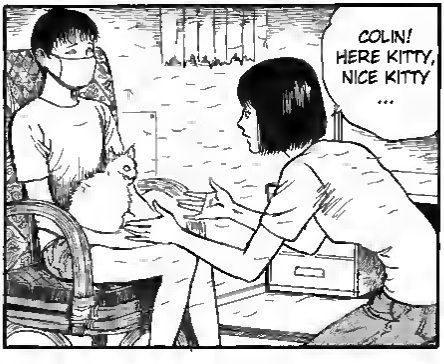
WHAT IS THAT?
DOES ANYBODY ELSE SEE THINGS DANCING IN THE AIR?
WHERE IS COLIN ANYWAY?
I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE - DEAR, WOULD YOU OPEN A DOOR?
I KNEW THAT CATS MALT BUT THIS IS JUST INSANE.
Slide
AHHH - CHOO!
IT'S COLIN'S HAIR ...
SOICHI?
THERE'S STILL SOICHI'S ROOM ...
LOOKED EVERYWHERE - WHERE IS HE?
CO-LIN!
COLIN!



PURRR
HRCH
HRCH
I'VE COME TO LOVE ANIMALS AFTER ALL.
NOW THAT I CAN BE NICE TO ANIMALS, I CAN DO THE SAME FOR PEOPLE, RIGHT?


skrch skrch
skrch skrch
skrch
skrch

CHOO!
AH-CHOO!
GAAAHHH!


COLIN!
HERE KITTY,
NICE KITTY
...

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO YOU?!
CO-COLIN ...
HOW DID YOU
EVER GET
LIKE THIS?

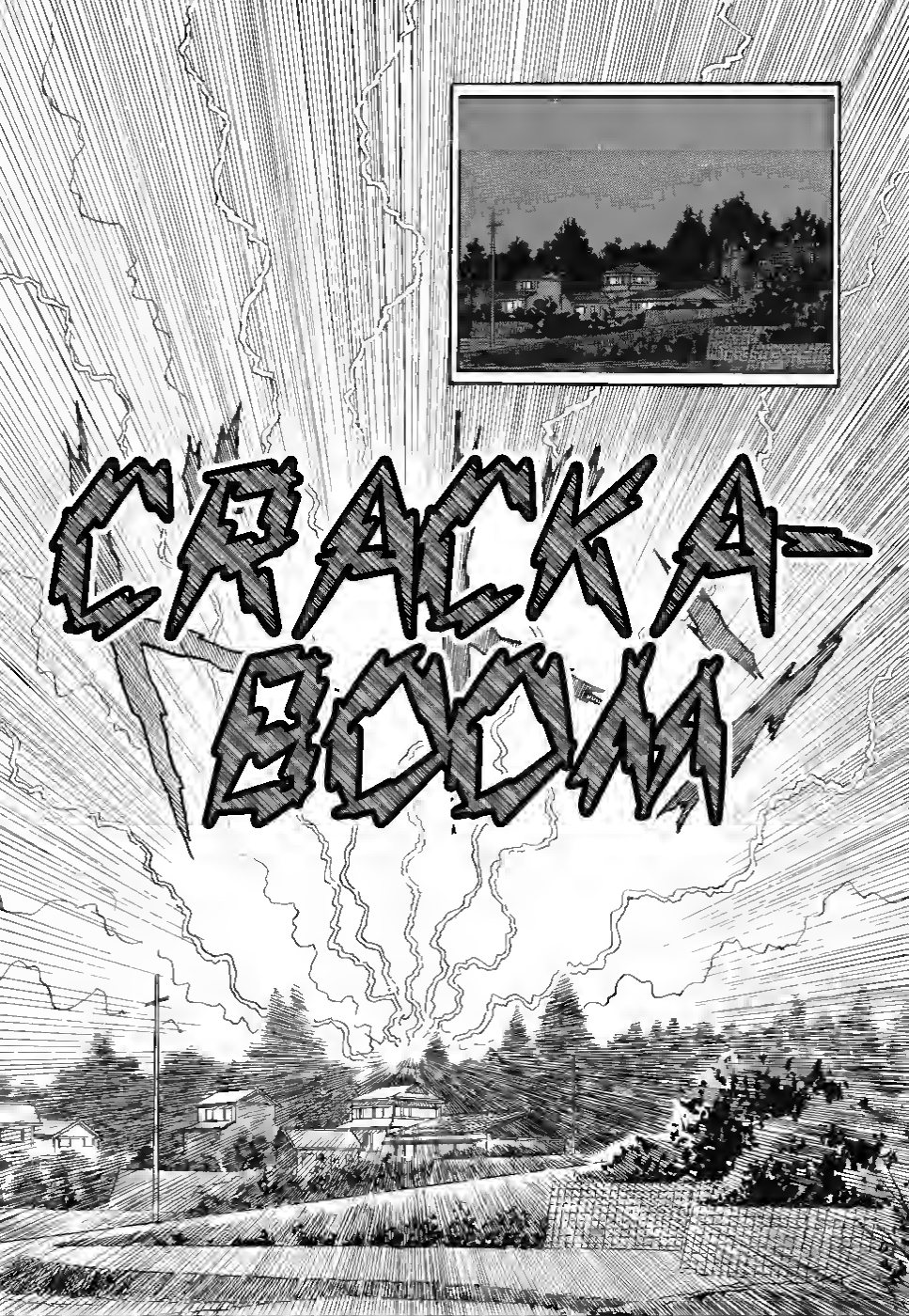
HSSSSSSSS
NOOO OOO!
N-NO WAY ...
HSS SSS
I SAID GIVE US -
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?!
SOICH
NEVER!
HAND HIM OVER!

BZZZZZ
WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!
C-COLON?!
GET AWAY!
ARGHHHH!

BZZZZZAP
BUZZZZZ
GAAAHHHH!
PING
PONG!

AIIIEEEEE!
CRRRACKLE
PURRR HUR HUR!
HELP ME, KOICHI!
HEL -
SOICHI, WAIT JUST A SECOND!
HEEEEEELP!
KOICHI! BROTHER! OLD BUDDY! OLD PAL!
THUD THUD THUD
WAIT - NOW CALM DOWN, SOICHI ...

RUN! EVERYBODY RUN!
SOICHI JUST CALM DOWN -
KOICHI, WHAT IS IT?!
SOICHI SETTLE! SETTLE!
AAAA AH- HHH -
AA AA AA AA-
PURRR HUR HA HA
MUNCH
MY OWN FAMILY, LEAVING ME FOR DEAD ...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS! TURN-COATS!
SOICHI, SETTLE DOWN!
huff huff


CRACK-
BOOM

WOW ... DANGEROUS, AREN'T THEY!
THEY SAY IT HIT AND SERIOUSLY INJURED ONE LITTLE BOY.
深沢病院
DID YOU SEE THE LIGHTNING LAST NIGHT?
ON A CLEAR NIGHT WITH THE STARS OUT!
ELECTRO SHOCK THERAPY.
HE'S GOOD OL' COLIN AGAIN!
PURRR
GOOCHY GOOCHY GOO!
CURSE YOU ..
CURSE YOU ALL ...
SHUT UP ...
SOICHI ... HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

THE END

TRANSLATED BY DANIEL LAU
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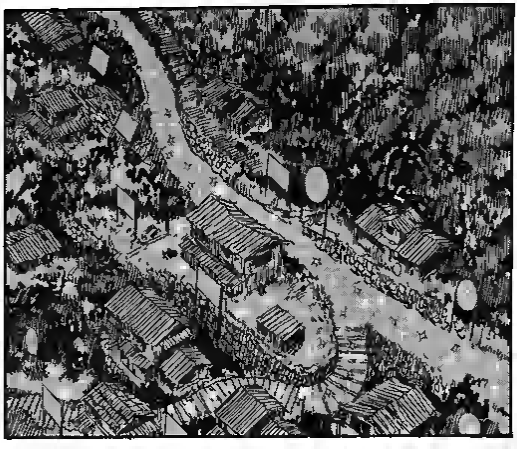
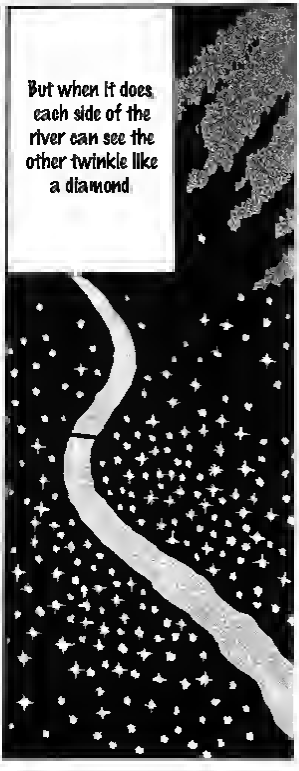
The K River is stuck between two prefectures. Follow it all the way upriver and you'll finally reach a lonely little canyon.

Come the winter, it doesn't see much light. All tucked away in there.



But when it does each side of the river can see the other twinkle like a diamond



THEY BUILT TWO VILLAGES HERE, FACING OFF ACROSS THE RIVER.
THERE'S A PRETTY STEEP SLANT TO EITHER SIDE OF THE VALLEY.
WHO KNOWS. MUST'VE BEEN DECADES AGO.
OKADA? WHEN DID THIS PLACE BECOME DESERTED?
BUT WHAT'S WITH ALL THE BROKEN GLASS? IT'S EVERYWHERE.
LOOKS LIKE SHARDS OF A MIRROR.

WHAT ARE THESE THINGS THAT LOOK LIKE GIANT SIGNS? THEY'RE ALL OVER THE PLACE.
LOOKS LIKE EVEN STAINLESS STEEL RUSTS OVER, YOU GIVE IT TIME.
THERE'S THE VILLAGE OVER THE OTHER SIDE.
MAKES FOR A WEIRD VIEW, DOESN'T IT?
TALK ABOUT WEIRD ... THERE'S MIRRORS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK.
THEY ALL SEEM TO BE FACING ACROSS THE RIVER.
... AND THEY ALL SEEM TO BE BROKEN.
THAT COULD EXPLAIN THESE HUGE SIGNBOARDS
MAYBE THEY USED TO HOLD MIRRORS TOO.
WHY WOULD EACH VILLAGE PUT UP MIRRORS FACING THE OTHER VILLAGE?
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO FIND OUT.

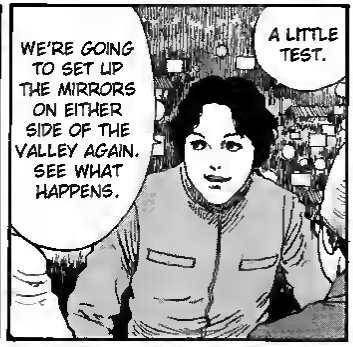
FINALLY THEY SPLIT INTO TWO FACTIONS, WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS AT THE RIVER AND STARTED THEIR OWN RESPECTIVE VILLAGES.
THE PEOPLE WERE ALMOST ALL BLOOD-RELATED, BUT WEREN'T WITHOUT THEIR QUARRELS.
IF WE GO BY THE LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE ...
THIS VALLEY WAS SETTLED BY A TRIBE FLEEING PERSECUTION.
IT HAPPENED SO SUDDENLY. NOBODY EVEN KNOWS WHAT BECAME OF THE PEOPLE.
AND THEN, SOME DECADES AGO, BOTH VILLAGES FELL INTO RUIN AT AROUND THE SAME TIME.
FROM THAT POINT ON, THE TWO VILLAGES BECAME KNOWN AS KIMON VALE AND KIMON GLEN.
THEIR DISPUTE CONTINUED EVEN INTO THE SHOWA ERA.
SHOWA = 1926 TO 1989
HMM.
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED HERE?
YOU'D HAVE TO THINK ALL THESE MIRRORS WILL SHOW US SOMETHING.

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO ...
BIG MIRROR WE GOT HERE.

EASY NOW, EASY NOW ...

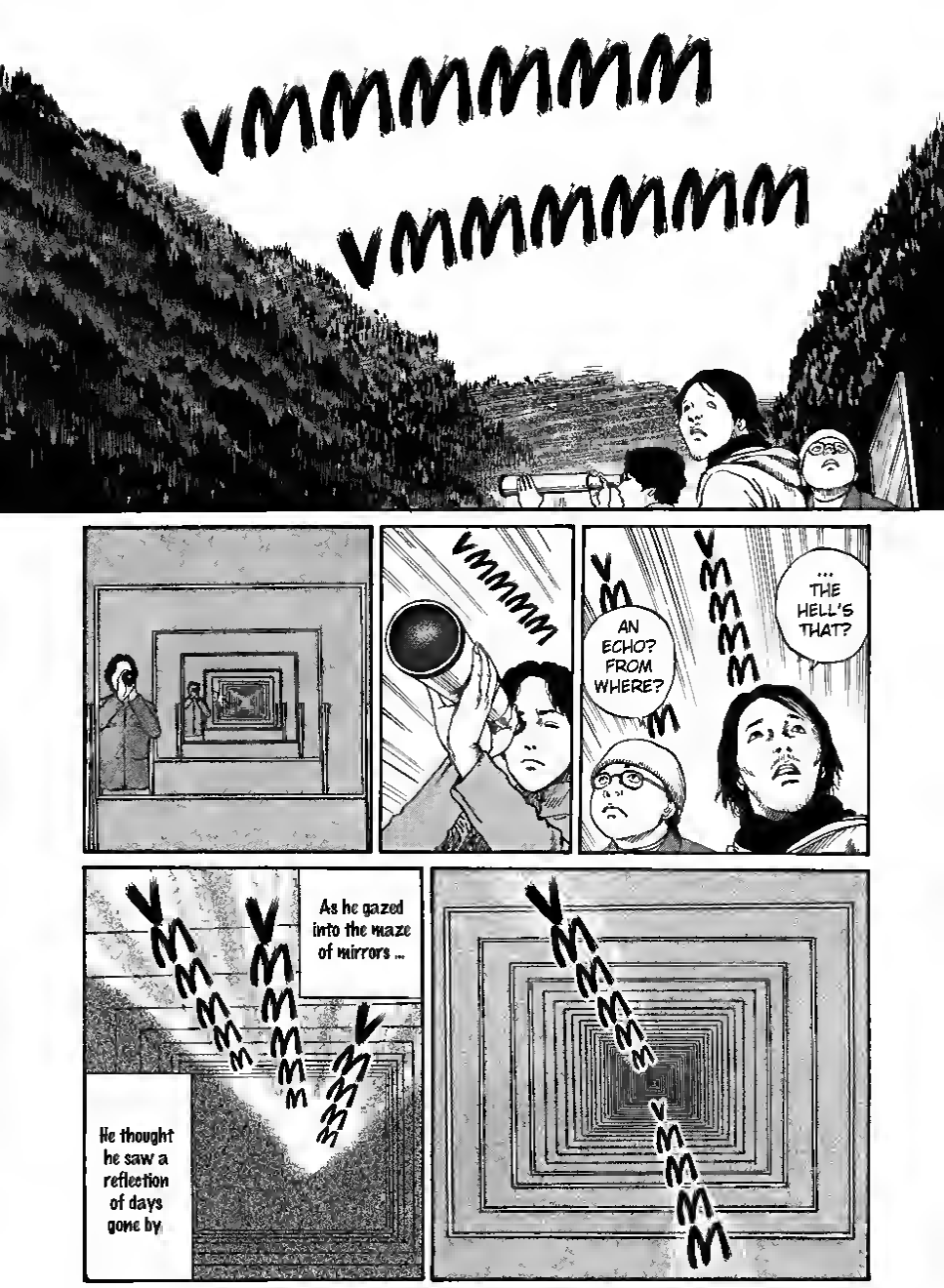
MIGHT STUMBLE ON A CLUE ALONG THE WAY.
WON'T KNOW UNTIL WE TRY!

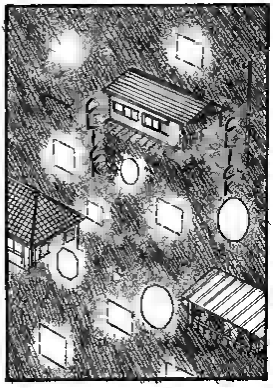
... WILL ANYTHING HAPPEN?

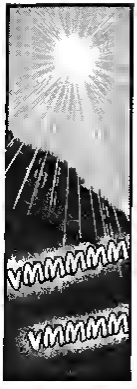

WE'RE GOING TO SET UP THE MIRRORS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE VALLEY AGAIN. SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
A LITTLE TEST.

THAT'LL DO JUST FINE.
IS THAT ALL OF THEM?

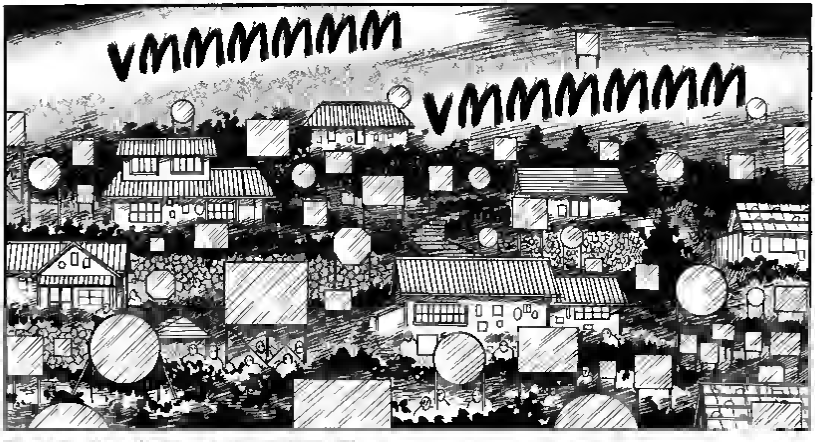
gleam
gleam
JUST GOTTA WAIT AND SEE, I GUESS.
VMMMMM
HEY?
VMMMM

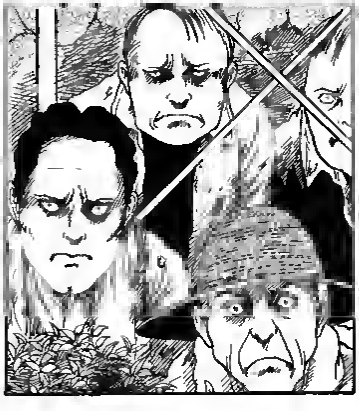

VMMMMMM
VMMMMMM
VMMMMM
AN ECHO? FROM WHERE?
... THE HELL'S THAT?
As he gazed into the maze of mirrors ...
He thought he saw a reflection of days gone by

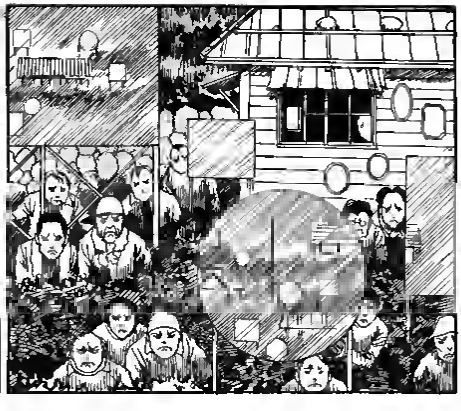

CLICK


VMMMMMM
VMMMMM

VMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMM


VMMMMMM
VMMMMMM





KIMON VALE ... RATS, THE LOT OF 'EM.
NO WAY!
ONE OF THE KIMON VALEFOLK MANAGED TO GET IN HERE!
YOU GOT IT.
GIVE US A HAND!
WE THINK WE GOT HIM CORNERED!
HEY! KOICHIRO!
SHICHIRO! WHAT?

HHH!
AHH!
THERE! THERE! GET HIM!
CRNCH CRNCH CRNCH
WE'RE THE SAME PEOPLE, AREN'T WE? I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT!
NOW JUST WAIT! I'VE GOT NO QUARREL WITH YOU.
NO!
ENOUGH! AIN'T NOWHERE TO GO.
WHY ARE YOU HERE? WHAT DOES KIMON VALE WANT?!
SHUT UP.
NNN NNN

STOP LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT!
STOP! PLEASE!
GAH ...
S-STOP THAT!
CLICK CLACK
NNNNN
GAHHHH!
AAAARGH!
STOP! ENOUGH!

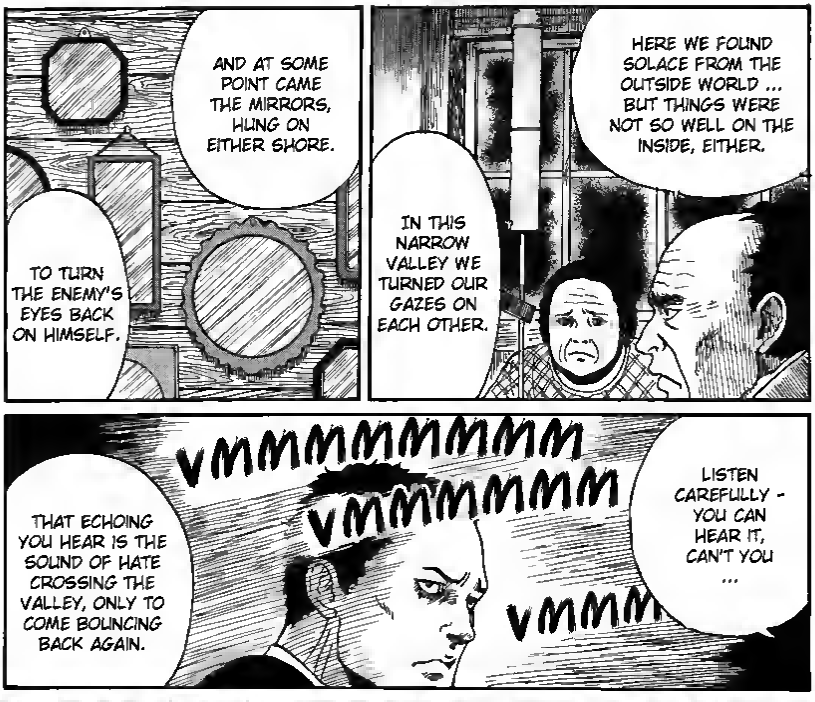
HAHHH!
NGH! AHH!
HE'S RUNNING!
TOYOMI!
ARE YOU HERE?
HHH ...
HAH ...
I HAD TO SEE YOU ..
SURE DID.
FOUND YOU AT LAST!
HIDEO! OVER HERE!

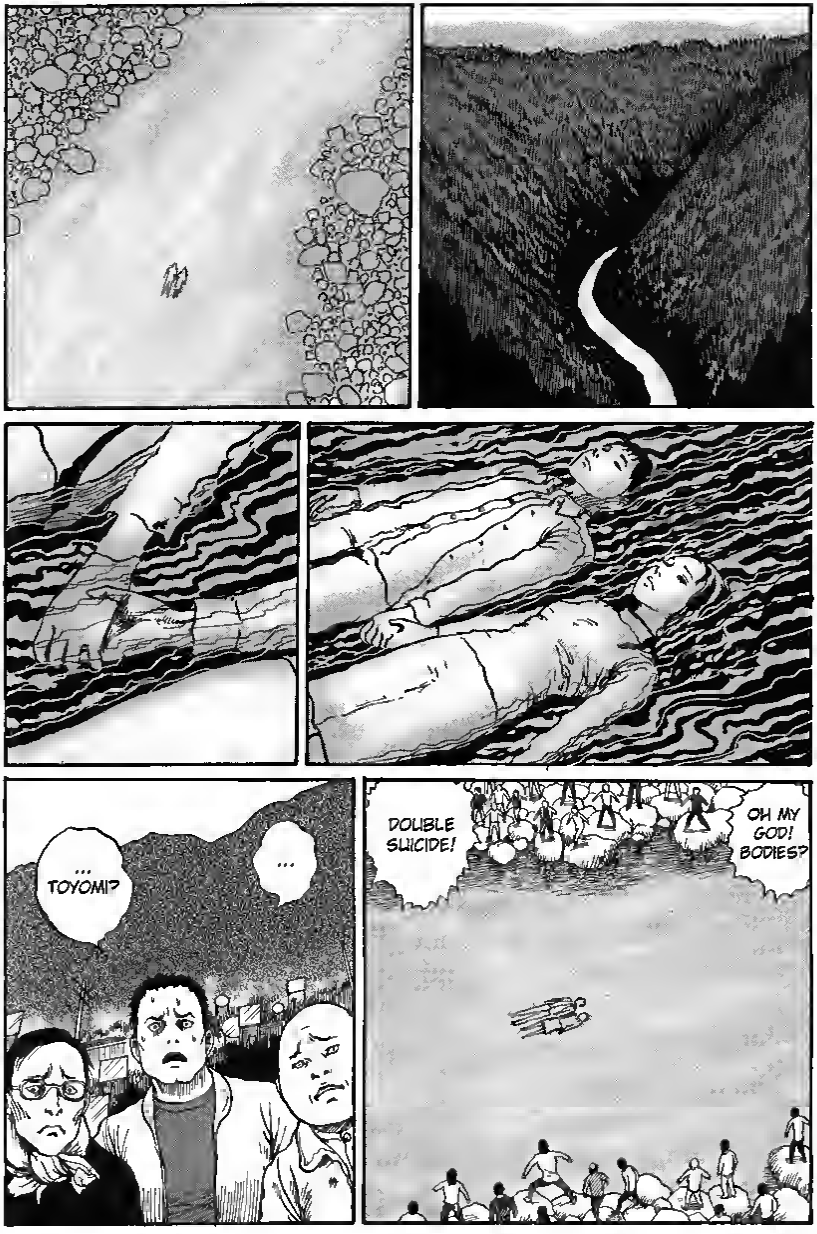
YOU CAN FEEL THE GAZE BETWEEN THEM ... IT'S LIKE SOLID ICE.
OUR PEOPLE HATE EACH OTHER.
... HIDING AWAY LIKE THIS?
HIDEO? HOW LONG DO WE HAVE TO KEEP BEING APART ...
JUST THE TWO OF US!
THEN LET'S RUN AWAY FROM HERE.
I GOT THE GUTS EVEN IF YOU DON'T!
HEY! COME ON!
HEY ... WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WE SHOULD ...
HUH. THOUGHT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN THIS.
AH -
REALLY? YOU MEAN IT?
ALRIGHT. ALRIGHT! WE'LL GET OUTTA HERE.

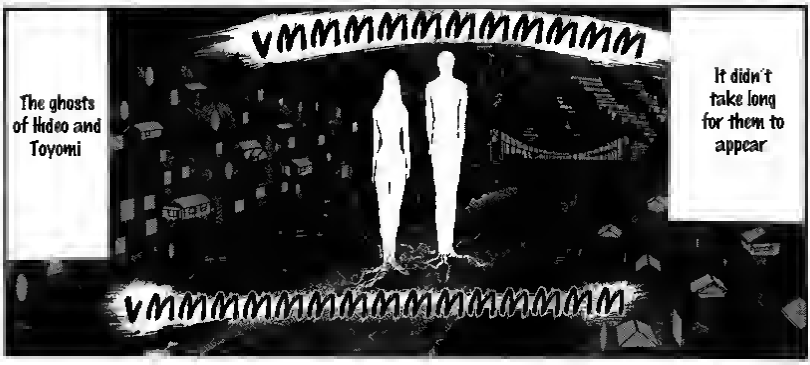
B-BUT ...
TOYOMI! WHERE'S YOUR SHAME? SEE IF I LET YOU ELOPE WITH THIS ANIMAL ...
AHH -
CRACK
AHHHH!
STOMP
STOP IT!
NO!
AH!
STAY THE FUCK AWAY FROM MY SISTER!
VMMMMMM
VMMMMMMM
STOP!
STOP!

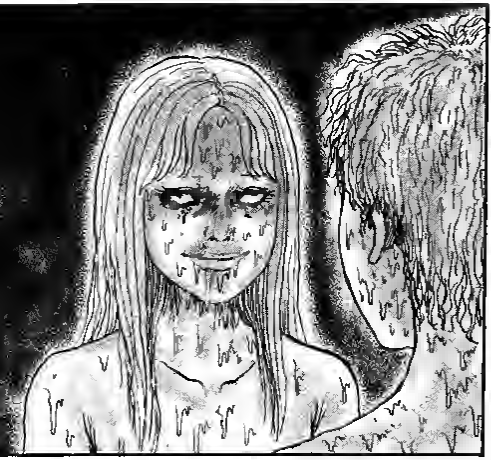
TOYOMI. FORGET ABOUT THAT RAT.
WE'LL GET YOU A REAL MAN. A LOCAL BOY!
SLAM!
H-HEY! I'M YOUR BROTHER! CUT THAT OUT!
H-

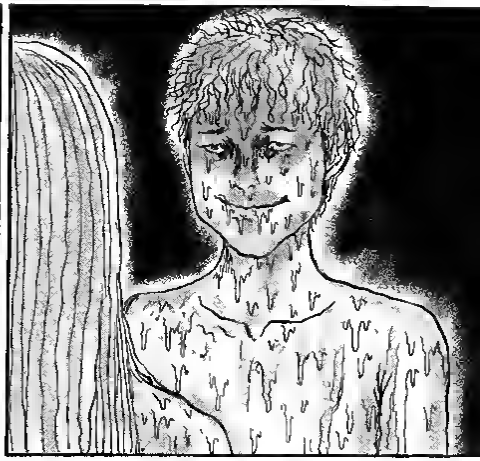
SHE THINKS SHE CAN SURVIVE ANYWHERE ELSE BUT HERE?
THAT STUPID GIRL.
YES, FATHER.
IS IT TRUE, KOICHIRO? TOYOMI TRIED TO RUN OFF WITH A VALE BOY?
IT'S OUR EYES.
THEY'RE OUR LINEAGE. ONLY WE HAVE THEM.
AND THEY WOULD NEVER ALLOW US TO REJOIN THEM.
THEY'RE NOT LIKE US, OUT IN THE WORLD.
THEY WERE CAST OUT.
AND DRIVEN INTO A PLACE LIKE THIS.
FOR US TO GAZE UPON SOMEBODY WITH ILL WILL IS TO CAUSE THEM PALPABLE DISCOMFORT.
AND IT'S THIS THAT LONG AGO BARRED OUR ANCESTORS FROM SOCIETY.


AND AT SOME POINT CAME THE MIRRORS, HUNG ON EITHER SHORE.
TO TURN THE ENEMY'S EYES BACK ON HIMSELF.
HERE WE FOUND SOLACE FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD ... BUT THINGS WERE NOT SO WELL ON THE INSIDE, EITHER.
IN THIS NARROW VALLEY WE TURNED OUR GAZES ON EACH OTHER.
VMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMM
VMMM
THAT ECHOING YOU HEAR IS THE SOUND OF HATE CROSSING THE VALLEY, ONLY TO COME BOUNCING BACK AGAIN.
LISTEN CAREFULLY - YOU CAN HEAR IT, CAN'T YOU ...
VMMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMM


...
TOYOMI?
...
DOUBLE SUICIDE!
OH MY GOD! BODIES?

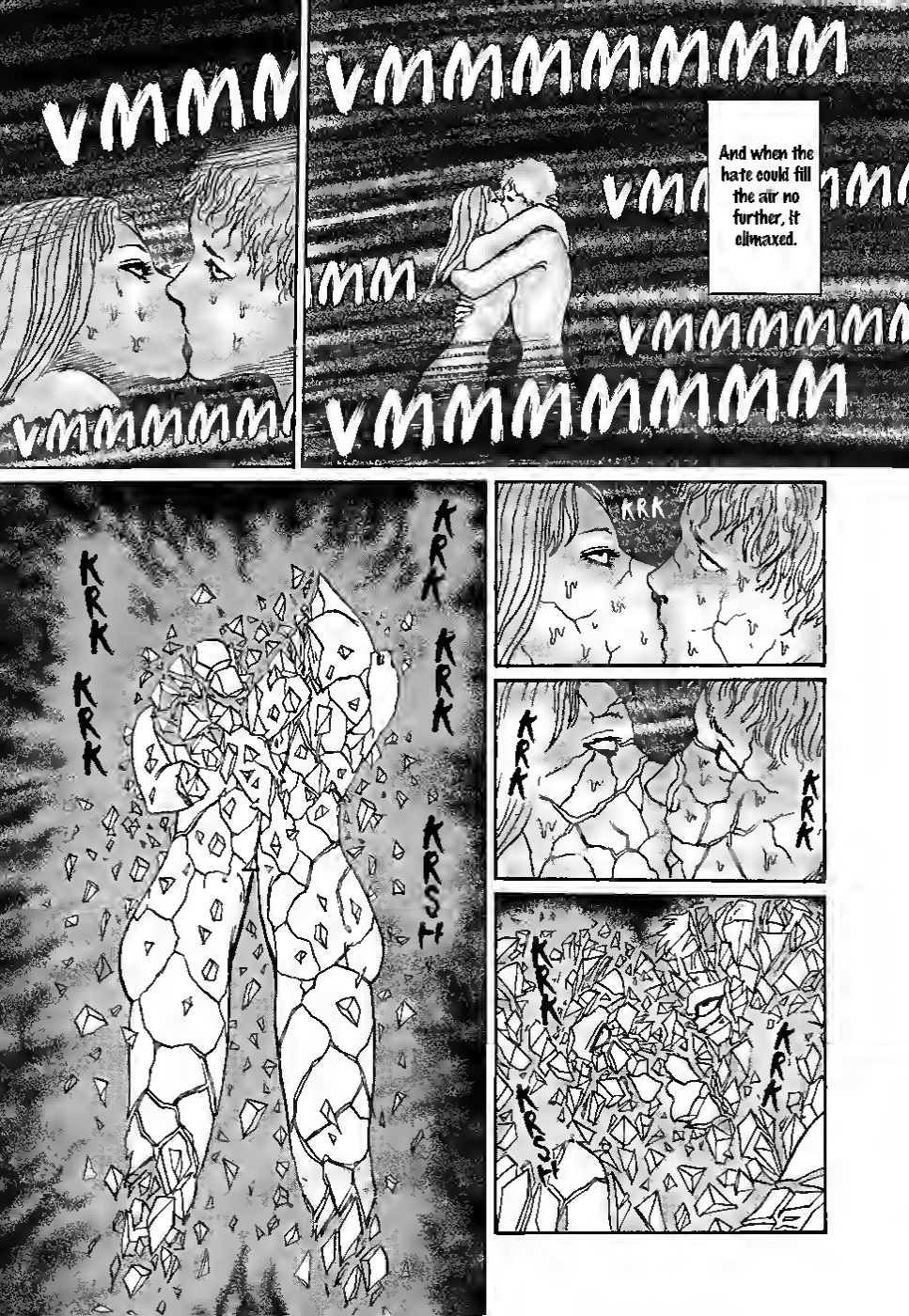

The ghosts of Hideo and Toyomi
VMMMMMMMMMMMM
It didn't take long for them to appear
VMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM





TOYOMI ...
KIMON VALE ... SHOULD BURN.
WHAT A DISGRACE ...
EVEN IN DEATH, WITH THAT VALE KID ... STOP, JUST STOP!
BURN KIMON VALE!
BURN KIMON VALE!

BURN KIMON GLEN!
BURN KIMON GLEN!
HIDEO ... HOW COULD YOU?!
HIDEO, NO! NOT WITH SOME FERAL OUT OF THE GLEN!
... to make love through the night.
The ghosts came every day ...
BURN KIMON GLEN!
BURN KIMON VALE!
VMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMMM
The curses and screams of the villagers grew to a fever pitch.


VMMMM
VMMMMMMMM
And when the hate could fill the air no further, it climaxed.
VMMMMMMMM
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRSH
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRK
KRSH
KRK

WHAT WAS THAT?!
...
VMMM

VMMMMMMMM
KRSHHH
KRSHHH
AAAHHHH!
KRSHHH
AAAAAHHH!
VMMMMMMMM
KRSH
VMMMMMMMM
KRSH
KRSH
AAAIIIEEEE!
VMMMMMMMM
BOOM
MMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMMMM
EEEEEEE!
AAAHHHHH!
VMMMMMMMMM

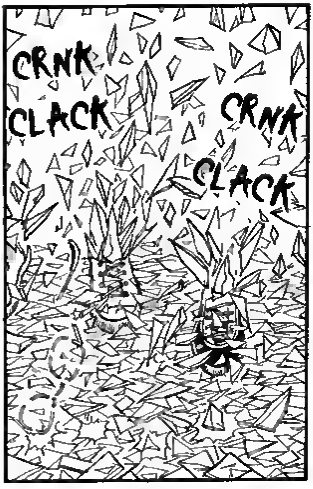
I - HUH?
VMMMMMMMM
HUH?!
VMMMMMMM
IT'S GETTING LOUDER AND LOUDER!
H-HEY! OKADA! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT WEIRD ECHOING SOUND?
VMMMMM
VMMMMMMMM
WHAT AM I -
WHAT AM I SEEING?!
THIS IS THE SOUND OF HATE ... THE LIVING, GLARING HATE OF THESE PEOPLE, ECHOING WITHOUT END ...
BUT WHY CAN WE HEAR IT?!
VMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMMMM

VMMMMMMMMM
WE'VE AWOKEN THE LOST GAZES OF THOSE PEOPLE!
OF COURSE! OUR EXPERIMENT ... OUR MIRRORS!
THE DISASTER I SAW IN MY VISION!
NO ... IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN!
OKADA! DO SOMETHING! QUICK!
AAAARGH!
AAAAGH!
VMMMMMMMMMM
VMMMMMMMMMM

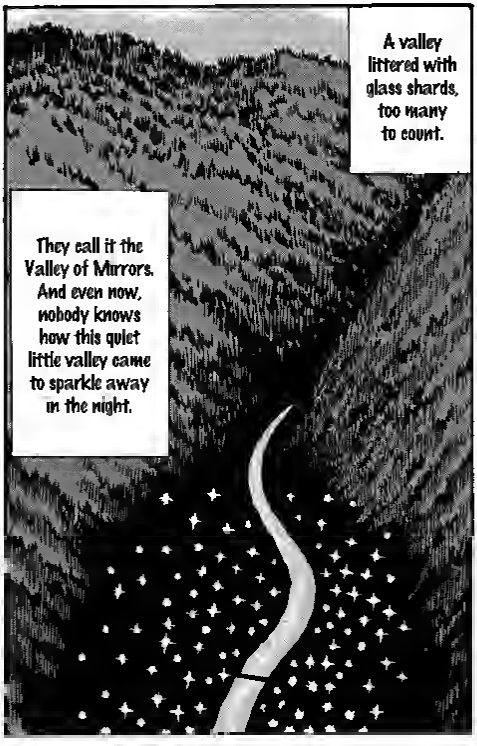
M-MINE TOO!
MINE TOO ... MY EYES ... THEY HATE ME ...

WHY'S IT LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?!
MY OWN FACE ...

KRK
AND WE WALKED RIGHT IN!
THEIR HATE, IT'S STILL RADIATING OUT OF THIS VALLEY ...
KRK
KRSHHHH
KR SH
KR SH

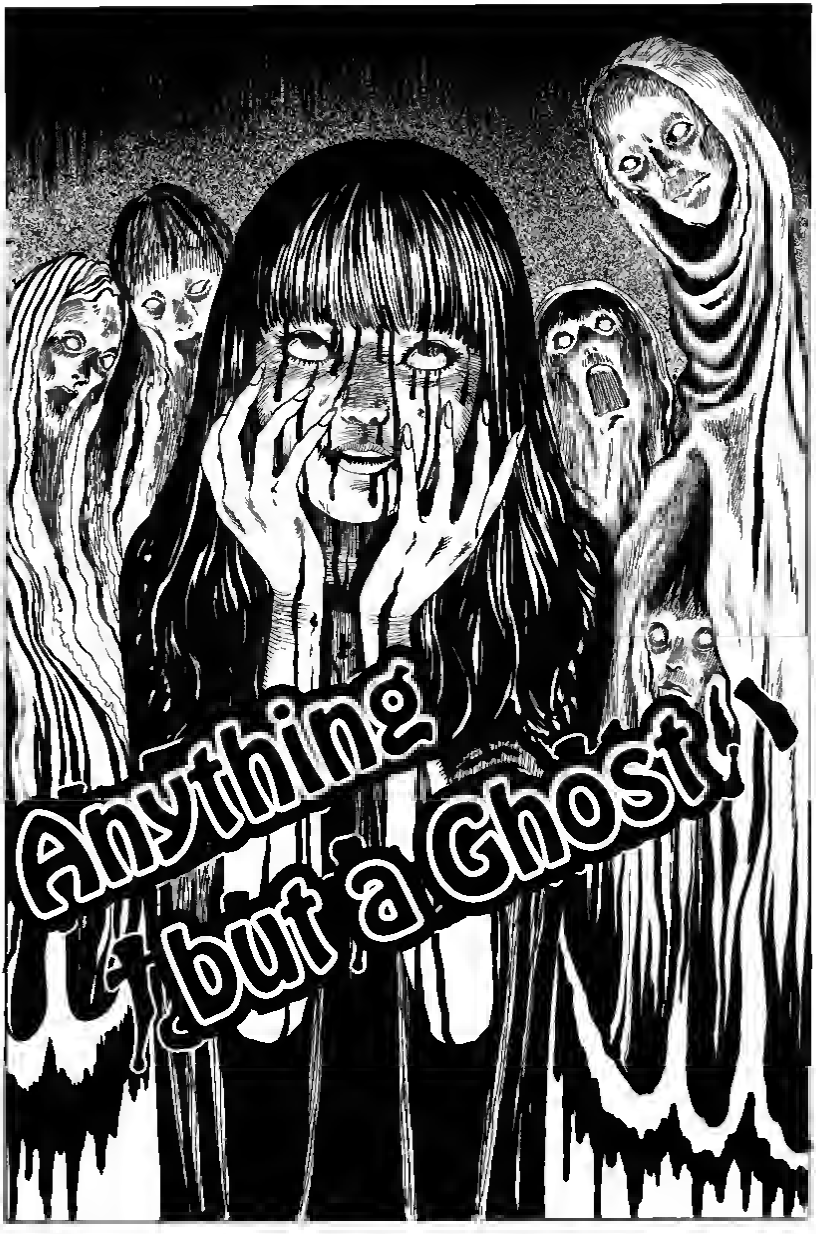

CRNK
CLACK
CRNK
CLACK

KR
SSS
SH
AR
SSS
SH


A valley littered with glass shards, too many to count.
They call it the Valley of Mirrors. And even now, nobody knows how this quiet little valley came to sparkle away in the night.

CRNK
CLACK
CRNK
CLACK

THE END



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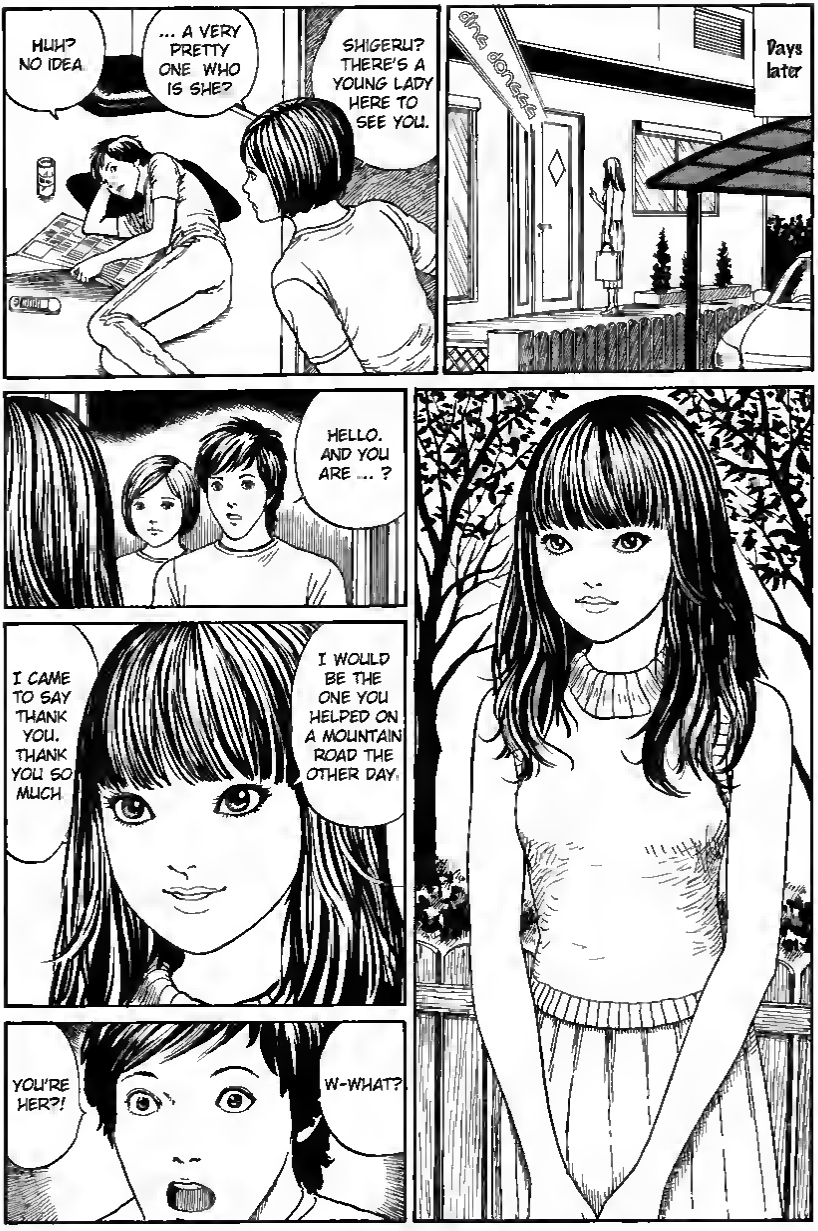
It was on the way home from work one day.
vrmmmmmmmmmm
Was it really a coincidence that I met her?
DARK ALREADY.
NO MATTER THE CAR
vrmm
.. SUCKS TO BE ON A MOUNTAIN AT NIGHT.
HALF EXPECTING A GHOST ROUND EVERY CORNER .

vrmmmmmmm
CAN'T BE GOOD.
SOMEBODY HERE? THIS TIME OF NIGHT?
EXCUSE ME? YOU ALL RIGHT?
kachunk
SCREE
IS EVERYTHING OK ...?
UM ...
...

G-GG-
GHOST?!
AHHH!

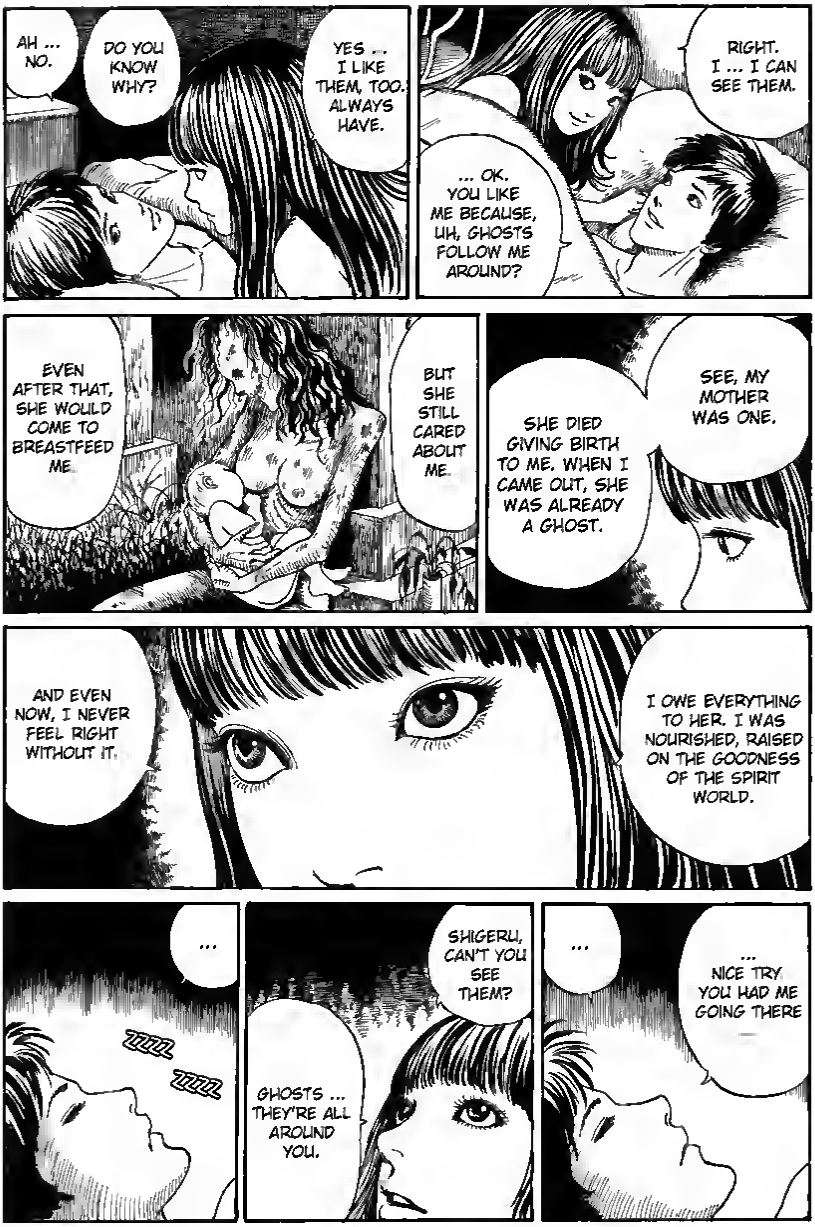
ARE YOU HURT?
Y- YOU SEEM TO BE BLEEDING QUITE BADLY
AND I JUST TOUCHED HER!
C-COULDN'T BE NO SUCH THING AS GHOSTS!
GOTTA MAKE IT, MAKE IT!
COME ON ..
Not taking any chances, I got her in the back and headed for the hospital.
Vrrrrrrrrrr
DOCTOR? HOW ARE HER INJURIES?
click
YAMA CLINIC

... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IT WOULD SEEM IT DOESN'T BELONG TO HER.
WHAT? BUT HER FACE IS COVERED IN BLOOD!
YES ... I ACTUALLY COULDN'T LOCATE ANY INJURIES.
They even questioned me about her, but let me go soon after.
The police arrived soon to take her away
IT COULD BE IN CONNECTION WITH SOMETHING. I'VE CALLED THE POLICE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF. SHE WON'T TELL ME A THING.
SOUNDS KINDA CREEPY, DEAR.
MY GOOD DEED FOR THE DAY.
SO YEAH. WEIRD NIGHT.
WHAT WAS I GONNA DO, YUINA?
I KNEW THAT IF WE LIVED ALL THE WAY OUT HERE IN THE SUBURBS THERE'D BE WEIRDOS.


HUH? NO IDEA
... A VERY PRETTY ONE WHO IS SHE?
SHIGERU? THERE'S A YOUNG LADY HERE TO SEE YOU.
Shiga dondaa
Days later
HELLO. AND YOU ARE ... ?
I CAME TO SAY THANK YOU. THANK YOU SO MUCH
I WOULD BE THE ONE YOU HELPED ON A MOUNTAIN ROAD THE OTHER DAY.
YOU'RE HER?!
W-WHAT?

THAT MIGHT EXPLAIN MY APPEARANCE, AND GENERAL DISORIENTATION . . I WAS QUITE AFRAID.
MY FRIENDS AND I HAD BEEN MAKING AN INDEPENDENT FILM OUT THERE. WE GOT SEPARATED FOR A WHILE.
- she slipped me a bit of paper.
Her name was Misaki. And on her way out -
OH MAN, YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT I WAS THINKING ...
HAH, THAT'S IT? THAT'S ALL IT WAS? HAHAHA!
Shall we meet again?
Call
090-
HEY? NAH, NOTHING.
SHIGERU? WHAT'S UP?

I started seeing Misaki in secret after that.
HOTEL Rue Noir
HOTEL Rue Noir
ANYBODY WOULD FALL FOR.
A GIRL LIKE YOU?
HEY. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT ME?
ISN'T THIS LOVELY?
UM. GHOSTS?
WELL ... YOUR GHOSTS. THEY FOLLOW YOU, SHIGERU.
AND WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT ME? C'MON, ONLY FAIR.
HMMM


AH ... NO.
DO YOU KNOW WHY?
YES ... I LIKE THEM, TOO. ALWAYS HAVE.
RIGHT. I ... I CAN SEE THEM.
... OK. YOU LIKE ME BECAUSE, UH, GHOSTS FOLLOW ME AROUND?
EVEN AFTER THAT, SHE WOULD COME TO BREASTFEED ME.
BUT SHE STILL CARED ABOUT ME.
SHE DIED GIVING BIRTH TO ME. WHEN I CAME OUT, SHE WAS ALREADY A GHOST.
SEE, MY MOTHER WAS ONE.
AND EVEN NOW, I NEVER FEEL RIGHT WITHOUT IT.
I OWE EVERYTHING TO HER. I WAS NOURISHED, RAISED ON THE GOODNESS OF THE SPIRIT WORLD.
...
ZZZZZ
ZZZZZ
SHIGERU, CAN'T YOU SEE THEM?
GHOSTS ... THEY'RE ALL AROUND YOU.
...
... NICE TRY. YOU HAD ME GOING THERE

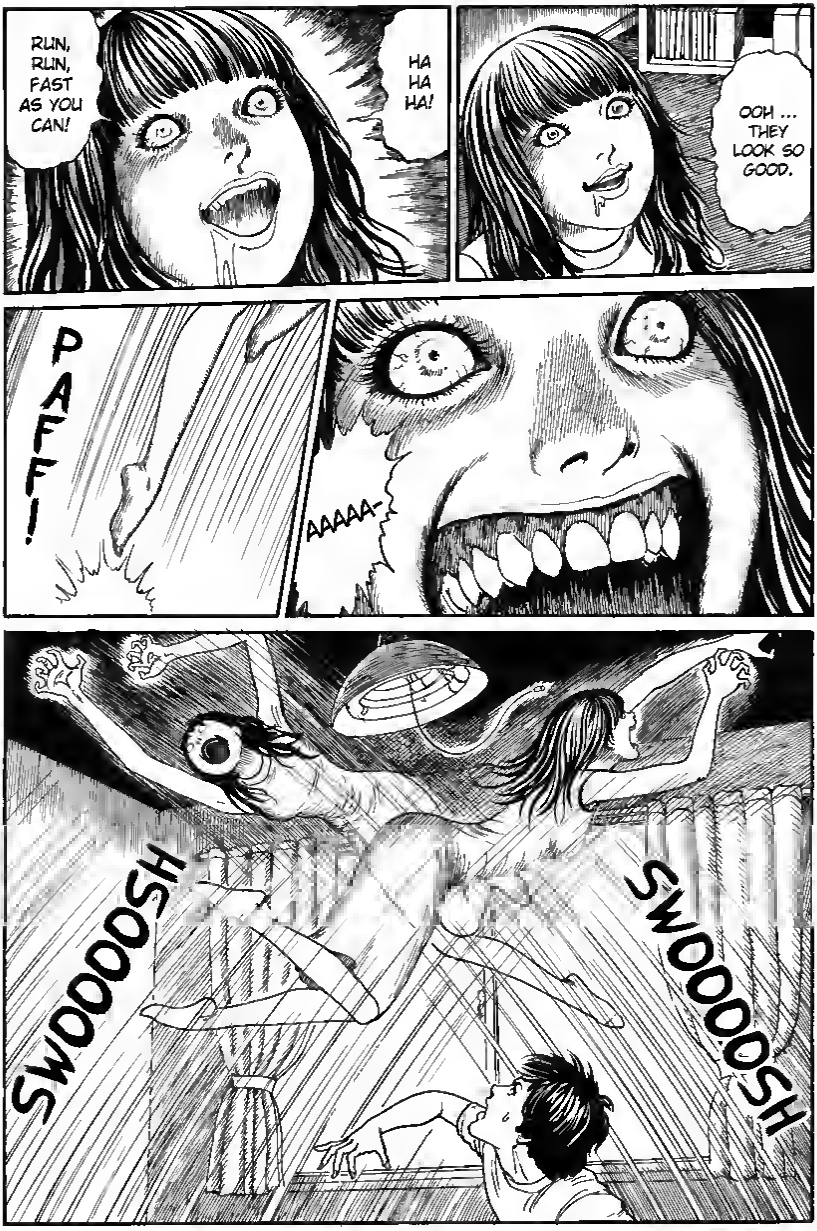
WHAT TIME IS IT?!
FUCK!
WUMP
MMF ..
-AHH!
HOTEL Rue Noir
HOTEL Rue Noir
...
HEY!
MISAKI
GOTTA GET HOME ...

THE ... THE HELL?!
I'M ASKING WHERE YOU FUCKED OFF TO WHILE YOUR PREGNANT WIFE WAS HOME ALONE!
WORK CAME UP, I TOLD YOU!
THINK YOU CAN JUST WALTZ IN HERE THIS LATE? WHERE WERE YOU?!
AND WHY WAS YOUR PHONE OFF?!
JUST A FRIEND.
click
HEY! ANSWER ME!
... WHO IS THAT?
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR
BRRR

SO . . WHEN CAN I SEE YOU AGAIN?
SORRY. I WAS IN A HURRY.
THAT WASN'T TOO NICE OF YOU, SHIGERU ...
LEAVING A GIRL TO WAKE UP ALONE LIKE THAT.
BEEP BEEP
CLICK
MY WIFE'S STARTING TO CATCH ON.
YEAH ... MISAKI, ABOUT THAT.
YUINA? I'M HOME ...
But the worst was yet to come.
IT'S FOR THE BEST. SOMETHING ABOUT THAT GIRL
ALL THAT BLOOD ON HER FACE ... WHAT THE FUCK WAS THAT ...

... SHE TOLD ME EVERY-THING
DEAR ...
SHIGERU ... WHAT KIND OF MAN DOES THAT?!
I never thought it could end like this.
It was too much too sudden, and it was all she could take. And one day -
I'LL KILL YOU! I'LL FUCKING KILL THE BOTH OF YOU!
Yuina had always been prone to instability and mood swings since the pregnancy.
YOU CAN'T BE LIKE THIS.
SHIGERU ?
... and our child's along with her.
She took her own life ...

LOOK AT HOW MANY GHOSTS ARE FOLLOWING YOU.
JUST A LITTLE LONGER
SHIGERU ?
WE'RE LONG OVER.
GO HOME ALREADY, MISAKI.
AND I NEED THEM TO STAY ALIVE.
I TOLD YOU WHAT I LIKED ABOUT YOU. YOUR GHOSTS. THEY'RE DELICIOUS.
SERIOUSLY, ARE YOU ON SOMETHING?
GHOSTS FOLLOWING ME?
BUT YOU BETTER BELIEVE YOU'VE NEVER TASTED ANYTHING SO GOOD
GO ON, DON'T BELIEVE ME LIP TO YOU
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR DAMN MIND?
MISAKI ...
SWIMMING AROUND THE ROOM.
IT'S YUINA AND YOUR LITTLE BABY ...
THERE'S TWO MORE OF THEM NOW.
LOOK ... CAN'T YOU SEE?


RUN, RUN, FAST AS YOU CAN!
HA HA HA!
OOH ... THEY LOOK SO GOOD.
PAFF!
AAAAA-
SWOOOOSH
SWOOOOSH

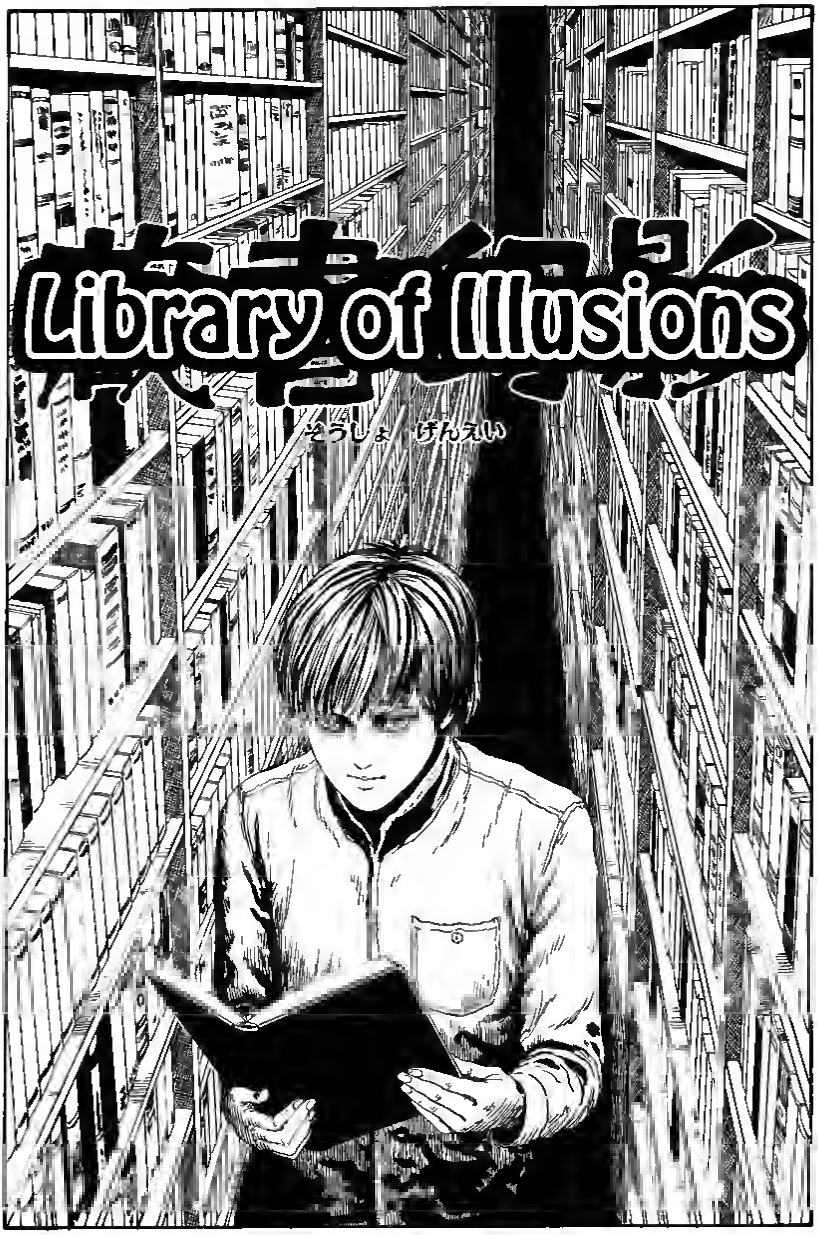
GOTCHA!
CLAP
444
PAFF!
EEEAAARGHHH!
FSSHH
CRACK
CRNNCH

EEEEEEEEEEEE!
CRNCH!
CRACK
IT CAN'T BE .. THAT SCREAM SOUNDS LIKE YUINA!
AAAAAHHHH!
N .. NO FUCKING WAY ...
EEEEEEEEEEEE!
MUNCH
MUNCH MUNCH
SLRRRP
SLRRRP

HEH HEH HEH ...
HA HA HA!
AND WHAT'S ALL THAT BLOOD?!
N-NO... WHY DID I HEAR YUINA'S VOICE?
AAAAAAA HHHHHH!
From then on Misaki would stalk me...
... just to prey upon the ghosts by my side.

And so I came to cling to dear life in the hospital.
東野病院
I caught something nasty living on the streets.
I lost my job and the house just like that.
I was then to fall on hard times.
日
NGH ...
AHHH ...
... waiting for my ghost to appear.
Misaki came to visit again today. I can hear her licking her lips in waiting ...

THE END



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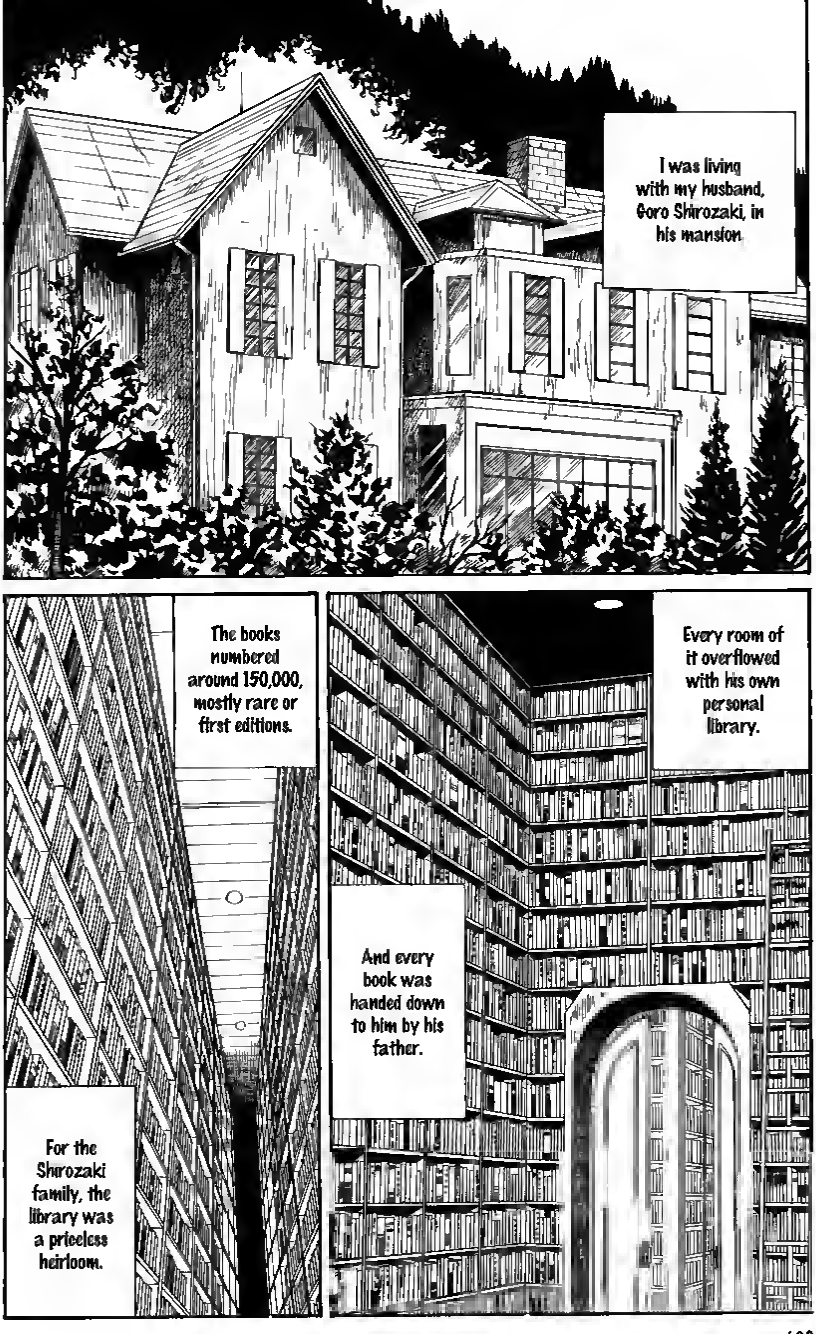
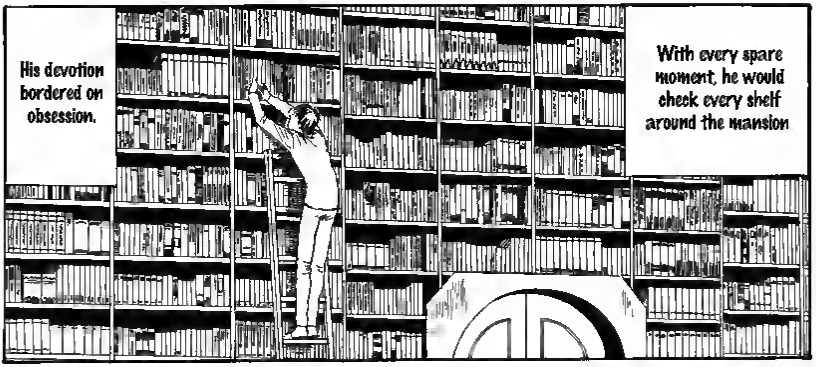
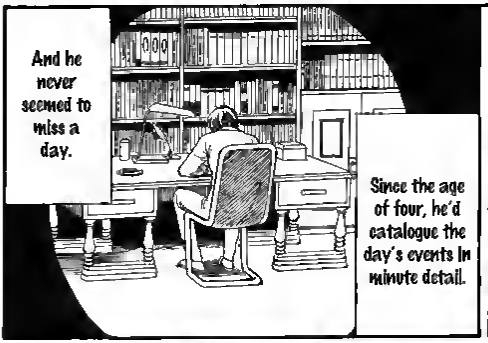
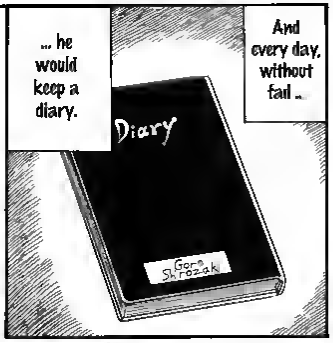

I was living with my husband, Goro Shirozaki, in his mansion.
Every room of it overflowed with his own personal library.
The books numbered around 150,000, mostly rare or first editions.
And every book was handed down to him by his father.
For the Shirozaki family, the library was a priceless heirloom.

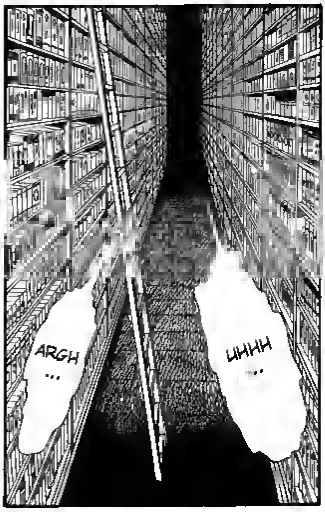
... that he'd read through the entire library no less than three times.
But I was most shocked to learn ...
From that mountain of books, he could pick out the one he wanted in an instant.
That was part of what drew me to him when we married.
And even if you doubted that, you couldn't doubt his intelligence.
YOU LOOK UPSET ...
DEAR, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
But

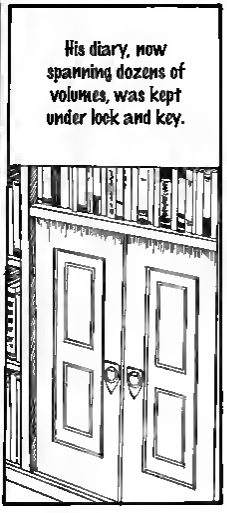
YOU TOLD ME YOU LIKED IT, SO I THOUGHT I'D CHECK IT OUT.
OH! I'M READING IT RIGHT NOW.
WINTERTIME FOR RENE BY MICHEL LASNE. A LOVE STORY.
KOKO! THERE WAS A BOOK HERE, HAVE YOU SEEN IT?
I'M SORRY ...
THAT WAY I CAN MAKE SURE EVERYTHING STAYS WHERE IT SHOULD BE!
WHAT?! YOU CAN'T JUST TAKE THEM AS YOU PLEASE!
IF YOU WANT A BOOK, ASK ME FIRST!
...
I WON'T TOLERATE EVEN A SINGLE BOOK OUT OF PLACE. NOT FOR A SECOND.
THIS LIBRARY IS MY RESPONSIBILITY. GOT IT?!


His devotion bordered on obsession.
With every spare moment, he would check every shelf around the mansion


And he never seemed to miss a day.
Since the age of four, he'd catalogue the day's events in minute detail.


... he would keep a diary.
And every day, without fail ..
Diary
Goro Shirazaki


ARGH ...
UHHH ...


His diary, now spanning dozens of volumes, was kept under lock and key.

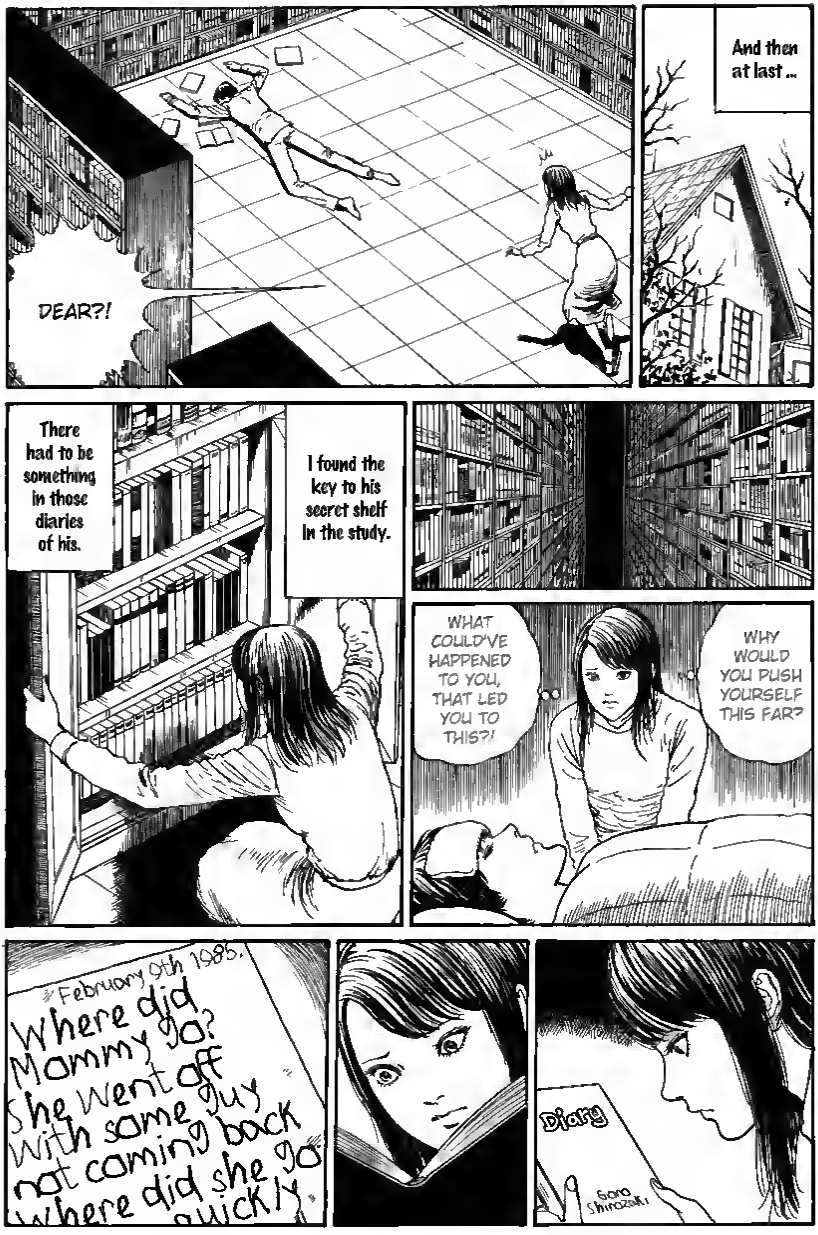
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
DEAR?
AAAARGHHH!
UNGHH ...
UHHHH ...
I WAS LOSING MY BOOKS, ONE BY ONE ...
... WHAT AN AWFUL DREAM.
AH -
THUMP!
And as the days went by, the fear only grew stronger.
I had no idea why he would have any reason to worry.
More than anything, he feared that something would happen to the library.

HGHH HGHH
NO! I HAVE TO CHECK THE SHELVES IN THIS ROOM, TONIGHT!
YOU HAVE TO GET SOME SLEEP FOR ONCE!
DEAR! GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!
...
YOU - YOU'VE BEEN GETTING WORSE EVER SINCE WE GOT MARRIED!
WHY ARE YOU SO HUNG UP ON THIS? TELL ME!
YOUR LIBRARY'S A TREASURE TO ME, TOO! IT'S ALWAYS BEEN!
WHAT? WHY?! I THINK I'LL DO SOMETHING TO YOUR BOOKS?!
I'VE FELT MORE AND MORE ... ON EDGE.
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE RIGHT. EVER SINCE YOU'VE BEEN LIVING HERE, KOKO ...

HHH
HGHH
With that, my husband had eyes only for his own ruin.
BUT I CAN'T HELP IT!
DON'T YOU THINK I KNOW THAT?!
I DON'T CARE HOW STUPID YOU THINK IT IS, I CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF THESE BOOKS!
GAH ...
HHH ...
HGHH ...
HGHH
IT'S GONE!
NO.
- HKK!
!

DEAR, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
KOKO!
KOKO!
IT'S GONE! IT'S NOT ON THE SHELF!
WHAT? WHEN I FINISHED IT, I PUT IT BACK! YOU ALREADY CHECKED THAT I DID!
KOKO! WHAT DID YOU DO WITH WINTERTIME FOR RENE?!
AND A RARE EDITION - NOT ONLY THAT, IT WAS HER PERSONAL COPY!
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING ... NOT WINTERTIME FOR RENE! IT WAS MY MOTHER'S FAVORITE!
We looked all night without success.
He was right, though. Wintertime for Rene was gone.

NO ... THERE'S ANOTHER BOOK GONE!
WHAT? DID YOU FIND IT?
AHH!
DEAR ... YOU CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS. COME TO BED.
HELLSKIN. MY DAD'S FAVORITE BOOK.
HE ALWAYS TOLD ME IT WAS THE SCARIEST BOOK EVER WRITTEN.
TANIO AKASABI'S HELLSKIN. GONE, GONE!
... WHICH ONE IS IT THIS TIME?
DAMN IT!
DAMN IT.
And there was nothing I could do to stop him.
From that day on he kept searching like a man possessed


DEAR?!
And then at last...
There had to be something in those diaries of his.
I found the key to his secret shelf in the study.
WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED TO YOU, THAT LED YOU TO THIS?!
WHY WOULD YOU PUSH YOURSELF THIS FAR?
February 9th 1985.
Where did Mammy go? She went off with some guy not coming back where did she go quickly
Diary
Sora Shirazaki

He was young, and there was a lot in there he didn't understand. But the kindness he felt in every word always brought him sweet dreams.
His mother was a gentle, beautiful woman. She always read *Wintertime for Rene* to him.
From the diaries, I finally came to understand something about his parents.
For a while he would run aimlessly around the house, calling for his mother.
MOMMYYY!
MOMMYYY!
But one day, she left his father for another man. It was winter. He was four.
Night after night, he read horror novels to his son, just to terrify him
As for his father ... he took it even worse.

.. he began to commit every book in the library to memory, one after the other.
One could only guess what he was thinking when ..
THE BOOKS ...
THE BOOKS ARE ESCAPING!
His father's condition further worsened, to the point where he was babbling nonsense.
In any case, it was clear that my husband had endured a childhood of suffering that might remain to this day.
Finally he was committed to a mental hospital.
And he doesn't say what happened to his father after that.
When my husband finally awoke, he started saying the strangest things.
2 days later ...
IT'S LIKE HIS ENTIRE LIFE UNTIL NOW IS CRAMMED INTO THESE PAGES
STILL, THE SHEER VOLUME OF THESE DIARIES, THE DETAIL

LATE LAST NIGHT ... THERE WAS SOMEONE AT THE DOOR
REALLY? WHERE?
GOOD NEWS, KOKO.
WINTER-TIME FOR RENE. FOUND IT.
SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL ... JUST LIKE MY MOTHER WAS.
BUT SHE WAS CLEARLY WINTERTIME FOR RENE
WINTERTIME FOR RENE HAD COME AT LAST
... AT THE DOOR?
SOME-ONE ..
I'D HAVE SWORN IT WAS A ZOMBIE.
AND IF IT WASN'T FOR HER READING OF WINTERTIME FOR RENE ...
FROM COVER TO COVER.
HOW DID I KNOW? SHE READ THE WHOLE THING IN FRONT OF ME.

CAN'T YOU SEE HER STANDING THERE? WINTERTIME FOR RENE.
LOOK.
... THAT WAS NO DREAM.
IT WAS JUST A DREAM.
LISTEN TO YOURSELF, DEAR
CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK
CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK
The next day ..
... terror further gripped my husband

CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK
WHY ARE YOU SHAKING LIKE THAT?
DEAR? WHAT'S THE MATTER?
CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK
HE'S THE MOST TERRIFYING THING EVER PUT ON PAPER ...
IT'S COME BACK FOR ME!
IT'S BACK ...
I TRIED TO KEEP HIM AWAY!
...
HELLSKIN!

JUST LISTENING TO THOSE WORDS ...
... IT'S LIKE GETTING RAKED OVER BROKEN TEST TUBES, AND NOW YOUR SKIN HAS ALL SORTS OF -
AND STARTED RECITING THAT CURSED NOVEL IN THAT DEATH RATTLE VOICE OF HIS!
BUT HE CAME IN THROUGH THE WINDOW ...
WE'RE GOING TO SEE THE DOCTOR, GET SOME HELP. THERE MUST BE SOME KIND OF TREATMENT FOR THIS ..
CLACK
CLACK
LISTEN TO ME.
LET'S SEE HIM DO HIS WORST.
SO LET HIM COME!
HE'LL COME AGAIN
THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT.
KOKO ...
I'VE GOT A BETTER IDEA.

หายใจ
หายใจ

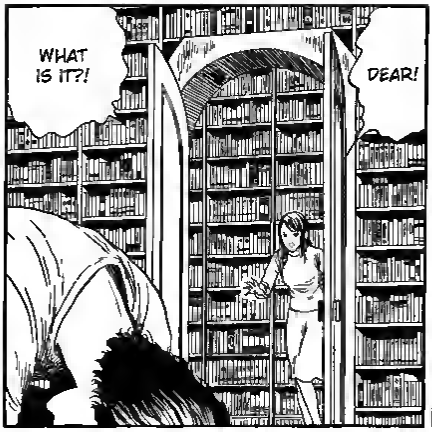
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST

PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
'FOREWORD. AGUDORMA GH SHAHWEH MEK ...
'I DEDICATE THESE CURSED WORDS AS AN OFFERING - TO THE CURSED SOULS BELOW ...'
D-DEAR?
'THE BLOOD THAT SPILLED AROUND THE WORLD
JUST A GLIMPSE OF IT, TO HOLD IT IN ONE'S EYE
WAS ENOUGH TO SEAR THROUGH THE ENTIRE BRAIN
SO THE MOUTH OF HELL COULD NO LONGER BE SEEN, ONLY HEARD AS THE MOST AWFUL CHEWING ...'

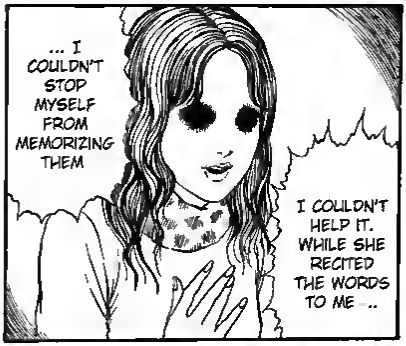
EEEEEAAHHH!
PSSST
PSSST
...
SKRLHHH!
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
He sat there for god only knows how long, whispering ...
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
It was clear to me he was fighting with something.
PSSST
EEAAHHH!
At times the fear would be too much to take, and he would scratch apart his own body.
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
PSSST
"THAT SURGEON HAD ONLY MADE THINGS WORSE, CURSED AS HE'D BEEN SINCE THE FIFTIES ...'
ENOUGH! STOP!
DEAR? STOP IT ...
'HOW COULD ANYONE BE CAPABLE OF THAT? IT ATE AWAY AT ME.'
'TO DO THAT TO A HUMAN BODY ... TO MAKE IT IN THE LIKENESS OF HELL ITSELF.'

STOOOOOOPPPP!
"FINAL CHAPTER."
"SADAMORT LA FEDORA..."
NOOOOOOOOOOOO
KOKO?
KOKO...
HELLSKIN IS GONE. I WON.
EVERY-THING IS OK NOW.
DEAR...
HAVE YOU COME TO?

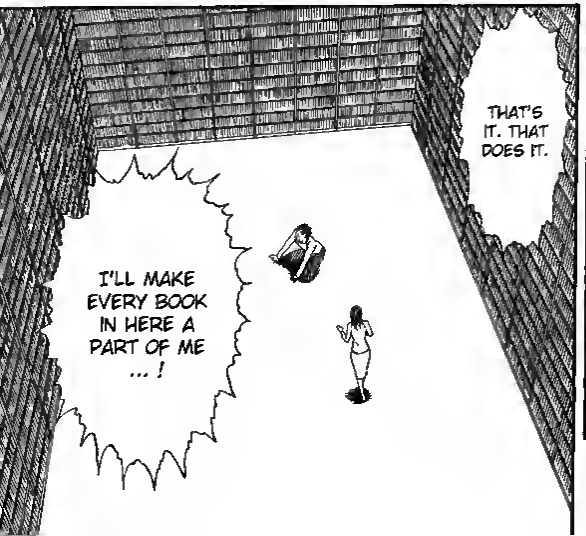
RENDERING HIS EXISTENCE MEANINGLESS.
I FORCED MYSELF TO REMEMBER EVERY LAST WORD THAT LEFT HIS MOUTH.
IT WAS HE THAT MET HIS END LAST NIGHT.
TRY AS HE MIGHT, FORCING THAT STORY ON ME ...
NO NEED TO WORRY
IT'LL ALL BE FINE NOW.
N, NOOOOOO!
AHHHH!!

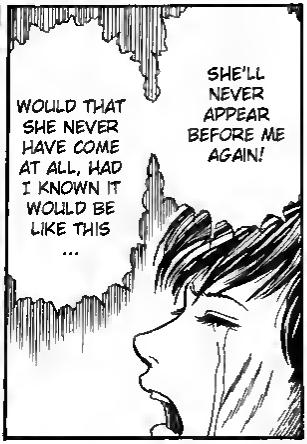

WHAT IS IT?!
DEAR!

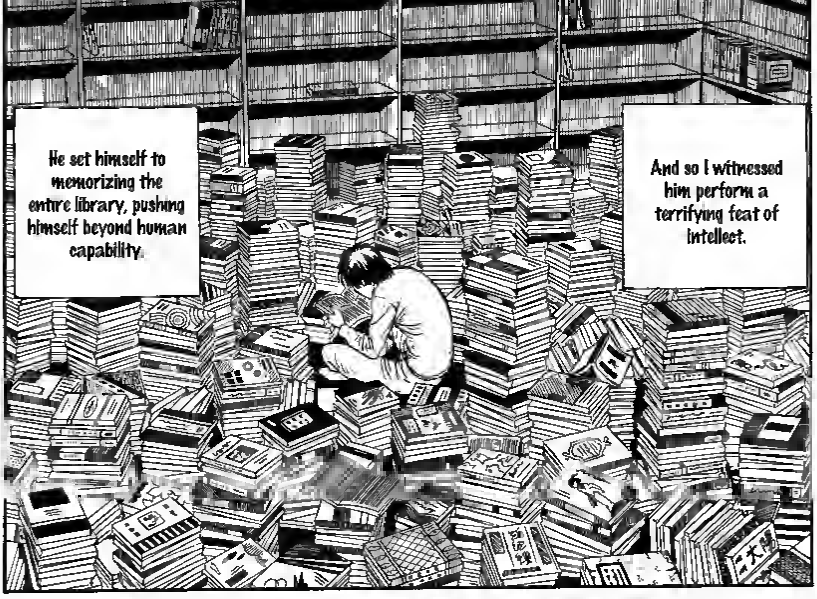
NO, NO, NO, NO!

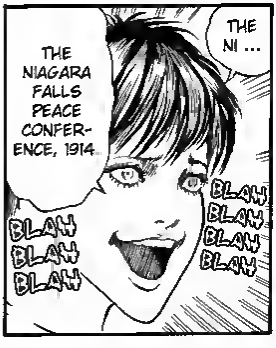

... I COULDN'T STOP MYSELF FROM MEMORIZING THEM
I COULDN'T HELP IT. WHILE SHE RECITED THE WORDS TO ME ..

WINTERTIME FOR RENE IS GONE!
RENE ...

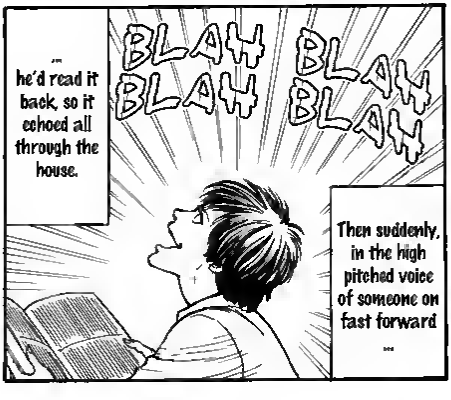

I'LL MAKE EVERY BOOK IN HERE A PART OF ME ... !
THAT'S IT. THAT DOES IT.

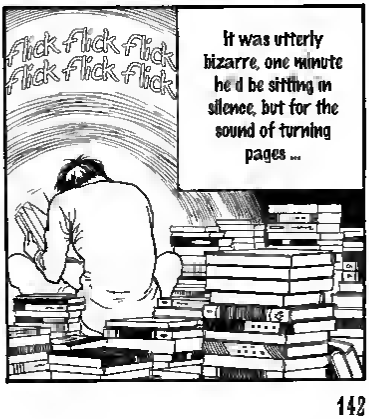

WOULD THAT SHE NEVER HAVE COME AT ALL, HAD I KNOWN IT WOULD BE LIKE THIS ...
SHE'LL NEVER APPEAR BEFORE ME AGAIN!

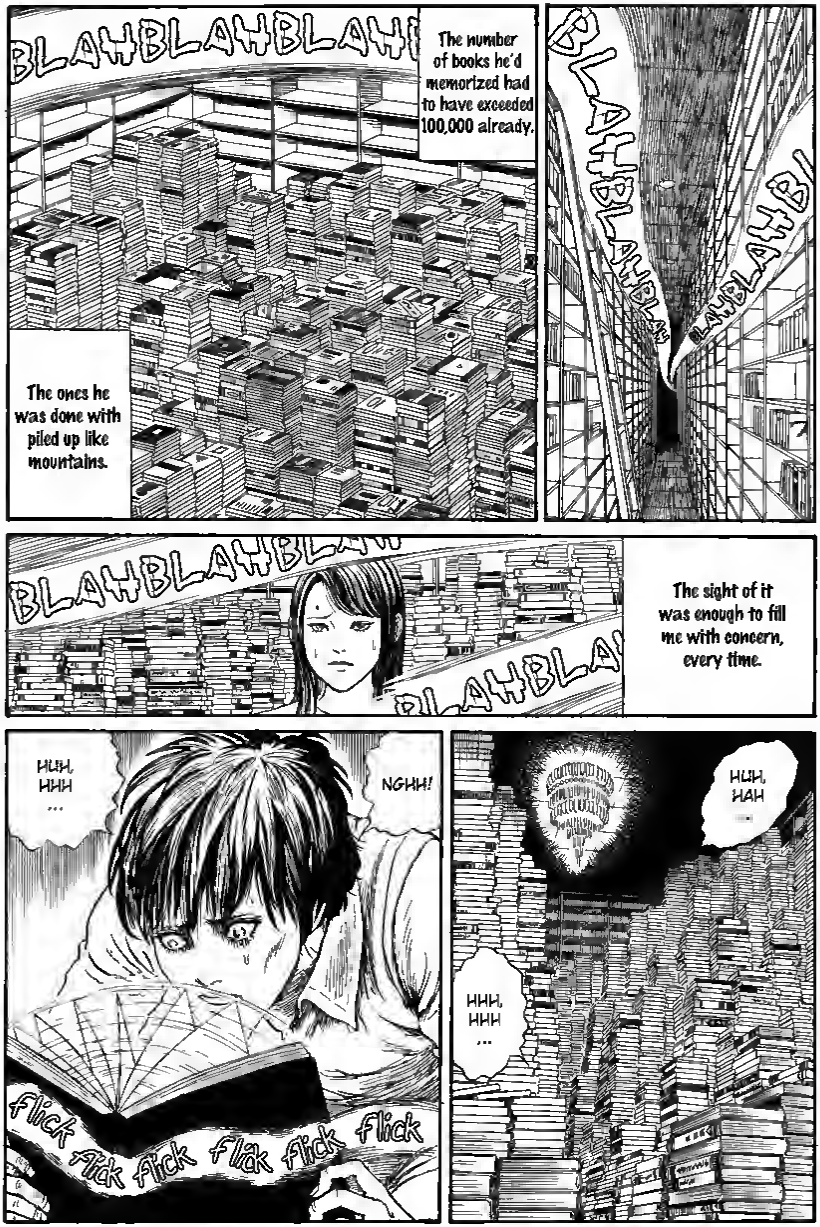

He set himself to memorizing the entire library, pushing himself beyond human capability.
And so I witnessed him perform a terrifying feat of intellect.


THE NIAGARA FALLS PEACE CONFERENCE, 1914.
THE NI ...
BLAH BLAH BLAH
BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH

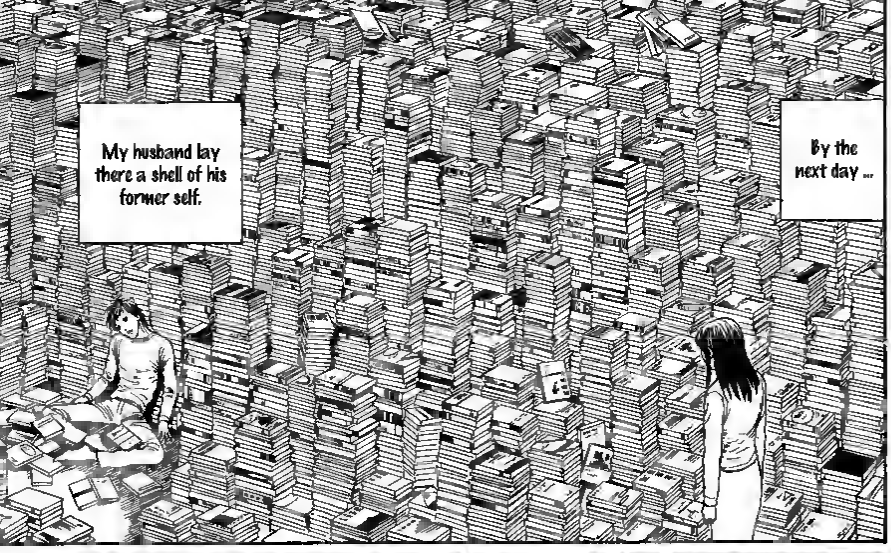
He stopped not even for encyclopedias, and proved it by reciting them for me.
Every book he owned, tens, hundreds of thousands ...

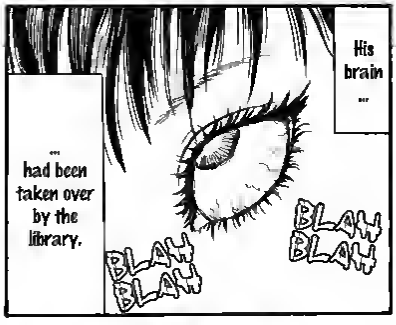

... he'd read it back, so it echoed all through the house.
BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH
Then suddenly, in the high pitched voice of someone on fast forward ...

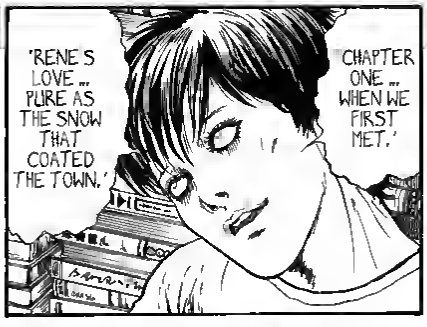

flick flick flick flick flick flick
It was utterly bizarre, one minute he'd be sitting in silence, but for the sound of turning pages ...


BLAHBLAHBLAH
The number of books he'd memorized had to have exceeded 100,000 already.
The ones he was done with piled up like mountains.
BLAHBLAHBLAH
BLAHBLAHB!
BLAHBLAHBLAH
BLAHBLA!
The sight of it was enough to fill me with concern, every time.
HUH, HHH ...
NGHH!
flick flick flick flick flick flick
HUH, HAH ...
HHH, HHH ...

BUT MY .. MY BRAIN .. IS REACHING .. CAPACITY
QUIET .. JUST A BIT MORE .. TO GO ...
DEAR, I'M BEGGING YOU ...
NO MORE. PLEASE
DON'T! STAY IN CONTROL!
flick flick flick
WILL I GAIN .. ALL KNOWLEDGE .. OR .. LOSE IT ALL
CAN I FIT .. EVERYTHING IN .. OR WILL .. MY BRAIN .. EXPLODE
BLAHBLAHBLAH
BLAHBLAHBLAH
BLAHBLAHBLAH


My husband lay there a shell of his former self.
By the next day ...


His brain ...
... had been taken over by the library.
BLAH BLAH
BLAH BLAH


'RENE'S LOVE ... PURE AS THE SNOW THAT COATED THE TOWN.'
CHAPTER ONE ... WHEN WE FIRST MET.'

Which books?
Diary
Happy memories
His own diaries.

By his hands lay a few dozen or so fallen books.
He'd been trying to memorize them right up until the end.

ススススス
IF HE COULD HAVE JUST REMEMBERED HIS OWN MEMORIES, WOULD HE HAVE KEPT HIS SANITY?
Diary
NO ... IT'S TOO SAD ...
ALL FOR THIS STUPID LIBRARY ...
DEAR!
THE SHIROZAKI HOUSE IS BURNING!
FIRE!

WHAT ?!
THAT'D BE MY HUSBAND.
GET ME AN ID ON THAT RIGHT AWAY.
WE RECOVERED A BODY. INSIDE THE HOUSE WHEN IT WENT UP.

BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO KILL HIM. THE FLAMES SPREAD SO FAST I COULDN'T GET HIM OUT.
I LIT THE FIRE MYSELF
YOU LIVED HERE? YOU'RE HIS WIFE?
SO I BURNED IT. AND IT'S ALL GONE. AT LAST, IT'S ALL GONE.
I JUST ... HAD TO DESTROY THE LIBRARY.
AH - UM, WELL ...
DID YOUR HUSBAND HAVE ANY OTHER FAMILY?
MA'AM, I'M GOING TO WANT YOU TO TELL ALL THIS TO THE POLICE.
NO MORE LIBRARY ... NO MORE ILLUSIONS ... I'M GLAD.

I DON'T THINK THERE'D BE MUCH POINT IN CALLING, THOUGH . . .
I KNOW GORO DOES, THE NEXT TOWN OVER, IN THE HOSPITAL.
Shiroha Hospital

BLAHBLAHBLAHB

Songs in the Dark
TRANSLATED BY DANIEL LAU
EDITED BY NAEREID
DANIEL-LAU.COM

♪ I'M OUT OF MY HEAD, GET OUT OF MY HEAD YEAH ♪
HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU ♪
HATE HATE HATE,
CHAKA CHAKA
CHAKA CHANG CHAKA CHANG
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA

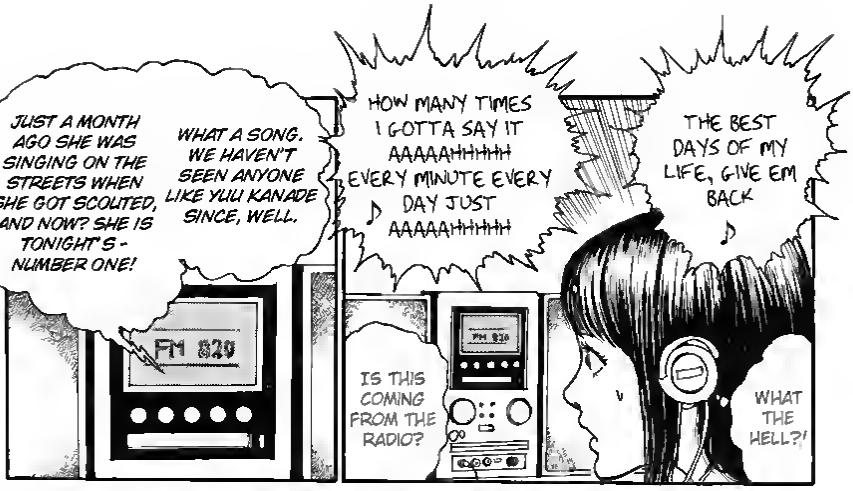
♪ YEAH ARRGGH HHHHH!
♪ YEAHHH HHHHHH ♪
MEEEEE EEEEEE ♪ ♪
♪ THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE, GIVE EM BACK, GIVE EM BACK TO - ♪
LEAVE LEAVE LEAVE - PLEASE
CHAKA CHAKA CHAKA CHAKA CHAKA CHAKA
HOW MANY TIMES I GOTTA SAY IT AAAAHH EVERY MINUTE ♪ EVERY DAY JUST AAAAHH COULD YOU LEAVE WOULD YOU LEAVE ♪
... NICE SONG?
UH ....
IT HURTS, IT SUCKS, AAAAHHH ♪
♪ WHY ME, ♪ WHY ME,
AAAAAHH ♪

CLICK
TIME FOR BED.
GULULU LUUH.
HATE HATE HATE,
HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU
♪ I'M OUT OF MY HEAD, ♪ ♪
GET OUT OF MY HEAD YEAH
CHANG, CHANG, CHANG,
CHAKA CHAKA

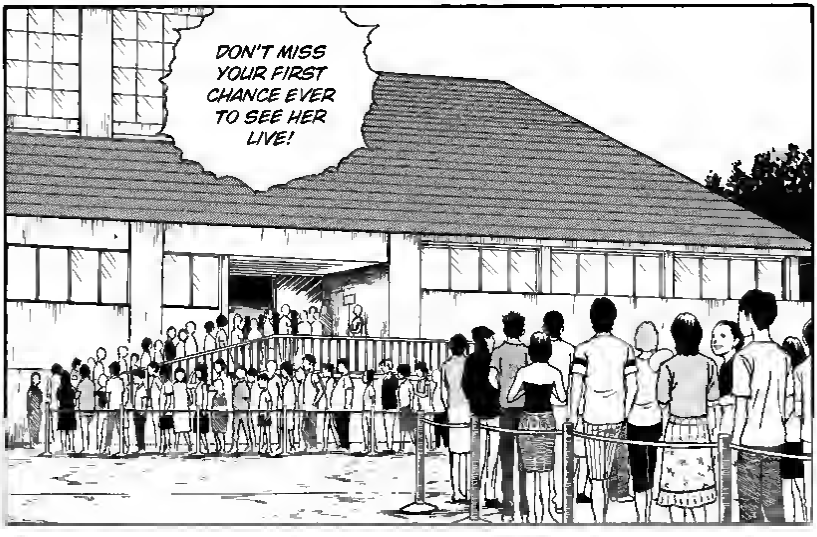
HOW MANY TIMES I GOTTA SAY IT
AAAAAHHHHH
EVERY MINUTE EVERY DAY JUST
AAAAAHHHHH
DAMN, CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD!
WHY ME, WHY ME, AAAAAHHH
IT HURTS, IT SUCKS, AAAAHHH
tweet
tweet
tweet
tweet
IT'S REALLY WEIRD. I HEARD IT FROM SOME RANDOM BUSKER.
GEEZ. WHAT KINDA SONG?
I DUNNO ... I COULDN'T SLEEP A WINK LAST NIGHT.
GOD, I THINK I CAN STILL HEAR IT NOW.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, TAMAYO? IT'S LIKE, STUCK IN YOUR HEAD?

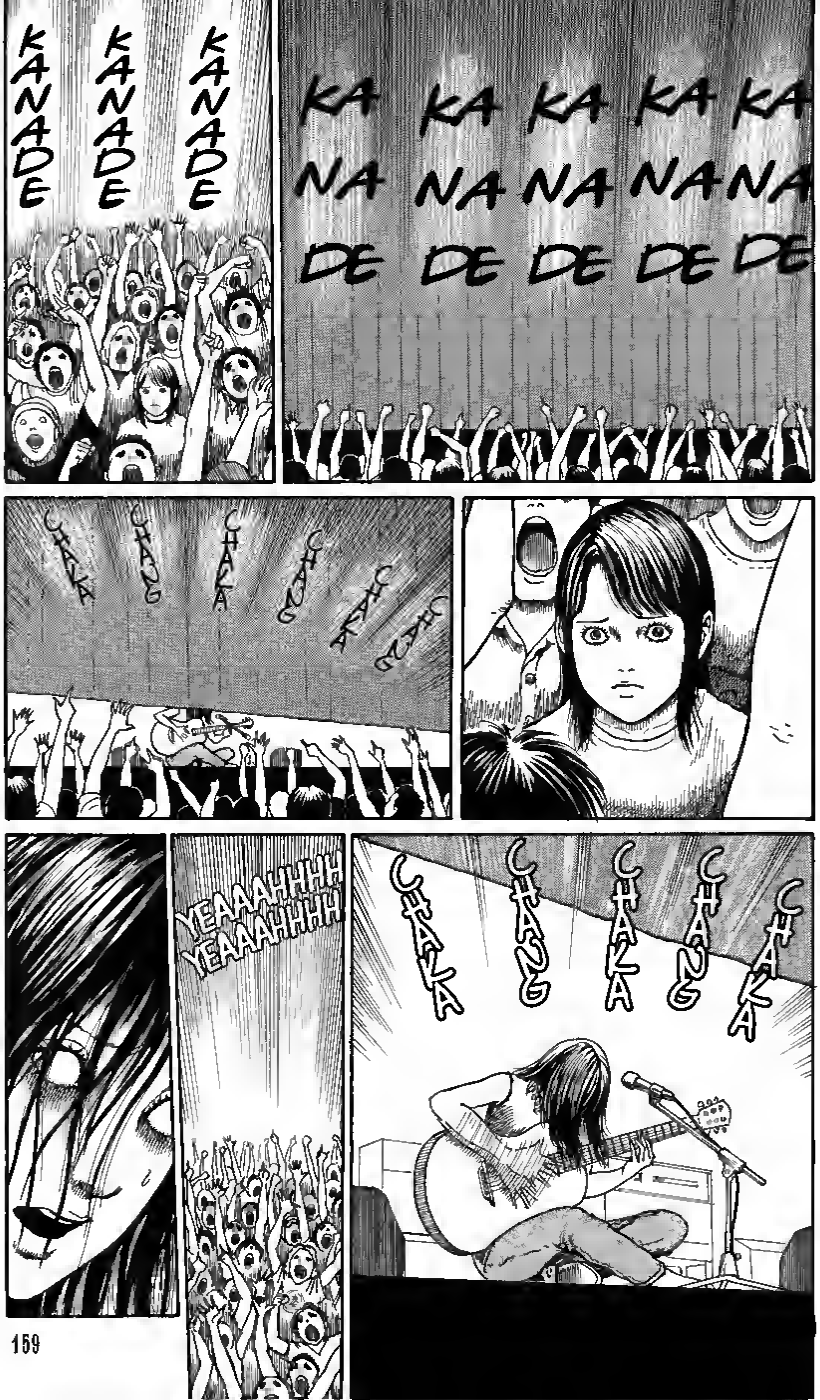
I KNOW I'M NOT HEARING THINGS.
IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR A WEEK NOW.
THE SONG HAS BEEN RINGING IN MY EARS.
TANIGOSHI CLINIC NEUROLOGY
One month later
IF SO, I CAN PRESCRIBE SOMETHING FOR IT.
IT COULD BE A KIND OF OBSESSIVE COMPULSION.
HATE HATE HATE, HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU ♪♪
THERE'S NO CURE!
IT WON'T STOP
AAAAH!

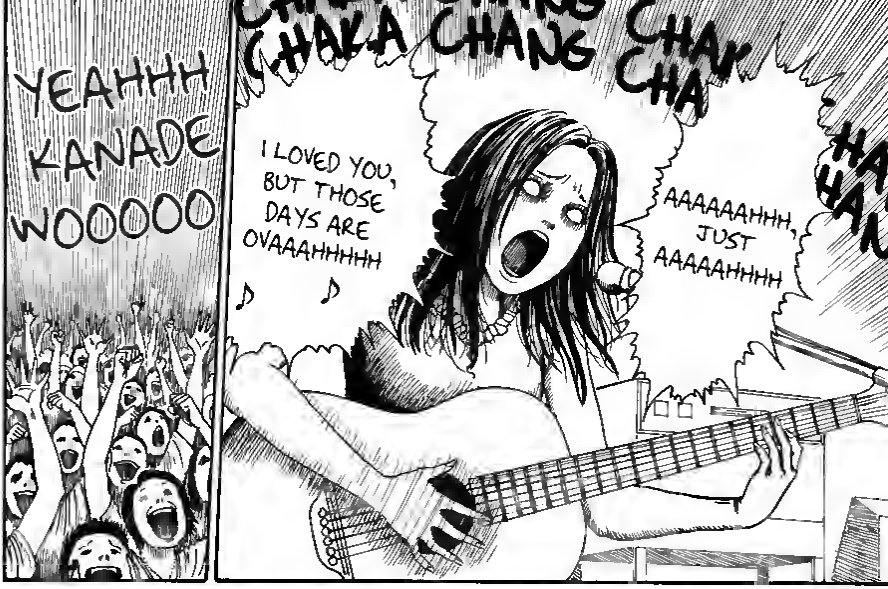
I GOTTA FIND THE BUSKER! I'LL GET MY ANSWERS OUTTA HER!
BUT I COULD SEARCH FOREVER WITHOUT FINDING HER ...
WHO ... WHO THE HELL WAS SHE?!
THE BUSKER ...
...
UNST
UNST
UNST
UNST
UNST
CHAKA CHANG CHAKA ♪ ♪
HATE HATE HATE, HATE ♪ EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU ♪ ♪
"HATE HATE HATE" ...
THIS NEXT SINGER MADE HER DEBUT ONLY A MONTH BACK AND HAS BEEN BURNING UP THE CHARTS - YUU KANADE, WITH A SONG OFF HER FIRST ALBUM,


JUST A MONTH AGO SHE WAS SINGING ON THE STREETS WHEN SHE GOT SCOUTED, AND NOW? SHE IS TONIGHT'S - NUMBER ONE!
WHAT A SONG. WE HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE LIKE YUU KANADE SINCE, WELL.
FM 820
HOW MANY TIMES I GOTTA SAY IT AAAAAHHHHH EVERY MINUTE EVERY DAY JUST AAAAAHHHHH
THE BEST DAYS OF MY LIFE, GIVE EM BACK
IS THIS COMING FROM THE RADIO?
WHAT THE HELL?!

AND WE HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR YUU KANADE FANS - SHE'LL BE PLAYING THE ----- HALL NEXT WEEK!
HER CHART TOPPING ALBUM IS ALREADY BEING CALLED A MASTERPIECE. EVERY SONG IS PART OF A MEDLEY, ALL COMING TOGETHER IN A KALEIDOSCOPIC SOUNDSCAPE OF MELODY AND KANADE'S OWN ELEMENTAL SCREAMING.


DON'T MISS YOUR FIRST CHANCE EVER TO SEE HER LIVE!


KANADE
KANADE
KANADE
KA KA KA KA KA
NA NA NA NA NA
DE DE DE DE DE
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
CHAKA
YEAAAHHH
YEAAAHHH


YEAHHH KANADE WOOOOO
CHAKA CHANG CHAK CHA
I LOVED YOU, BUT THOSE DAYS ARE OVAAAHHHHH
♪ ♪
AAAAAAHHH, JUST AAAAAHHHH

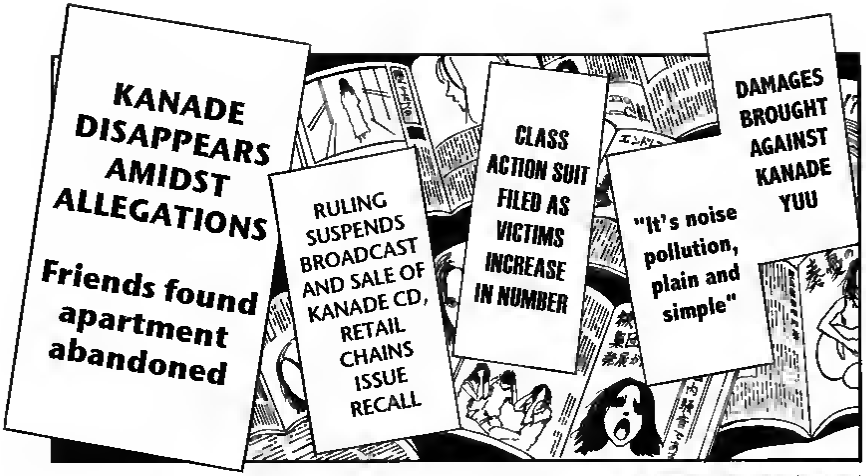
LIVING IS HELL I WANT TO DIE DIE DIE
YOU HURT ME AND YOU SAID GOODBYE, WHY WHY WHY

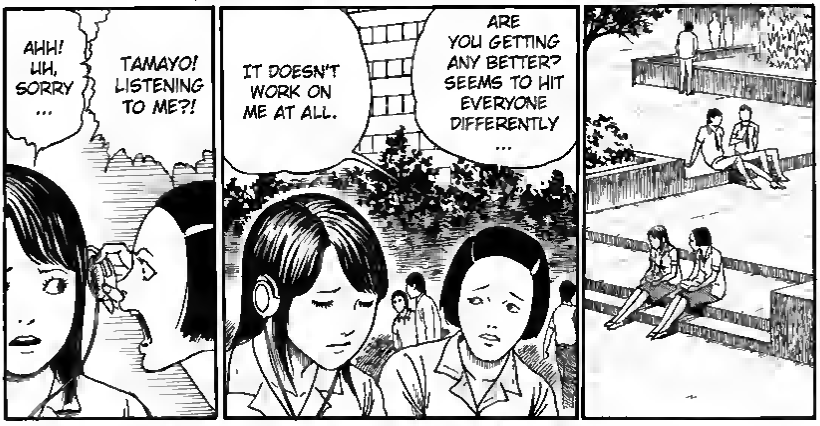
AAAAHHH
COULD YOU LEAVE WOULD YOU LEAVE
KANADE YEAAHHH

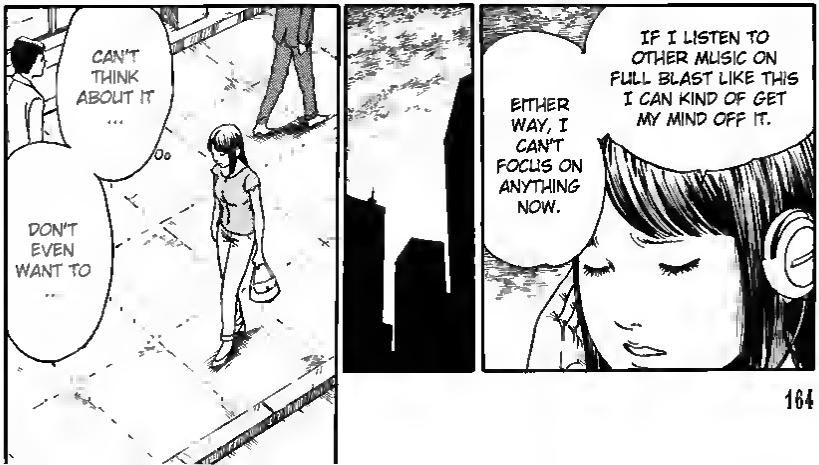
NO FUCKING MOOOORE ♪
AAAAAAIIIH
CRASH
FUCK - OOOOLLL

THUD
JUST FUCKIN' ♪
STOOOOOP ♪
THUD
THUD
THUD
MRR
MRR
MRR
THEY CALLED AN AMBULANCE, YEAH?
Bustle
Bustle
IS SHE OK? WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
AAAAAAHHH
GET THE FUCK OUUUT

I NEVER KNEW MUSIC COULD DO THAT TO YOU.
ME TOO. TWO WEEKS, RUNNING NON-STOP IN MY HEAD.
HER SONGS HAVE ALWAYS STAYED WITH ME.
JESUS. I'M A HUGE FAN, TOO.
YUU KANADE. WHAT A TALENT TO HAVE ...
SHE CAN MAKE SONGS SO CATCHY THEY NEVER LEAVE.
SO IT'S NOT JUST ME ...
THERE ARE DEFINITELY OTHERS HERE JUST THE SAME!
YUU KANADE'S OEBUT ALBUM BREAKS ONE MILLION SALES
That song - once you hear it, you can't unhear it
NERVOUS BREAK-DOWNS RAMPANT AMONGST KANADE FANOOM
YUU KANADE COLLAPSES ON STAGE, RUSHED TO HOSPITAL
YUU KANADE'S "CONSTANT SINGING DISTURBED PATIENTS, WARD"
Prematurely released from hospital
The dark side behind the phenomenon of the world's catchiest song


KANADE DISAPPEARS AMIDST ALLEGATIONS
Friends found apartment abandoned
RULING SUSPENDS BROADCAST AND SALE OF KANADE CD, RETAIL CHAINS ISSUE RECALL
CLASS ACTION SUIT FILED AS VICTIMS INCREASE IN NUMBER
"It's noise pollution, plain and simple"
DAMAGES BROUGHT AGAINST KANADE YUU


AHH! UH, SORRY ...
TAMAYO! LISTENING TO ME?!
IT DOESN'T WORK ON ME AT ALL.
ARE YOU GETTING ANY BETTER? SEEMS TO HIT EVERYONE DIFFERENTLY ...


CAN'T THINK ABOUT IT ...
DON'T EVEN WANT TO ...
EITHER WAY, I CAN'T FOCUS ON ANYTHING NOW.
IF I LISTEN TO OTHER MUSIC ON FULL BLAST LIKE THIS I CAN KIND OF GET MY MIND OFF IT.

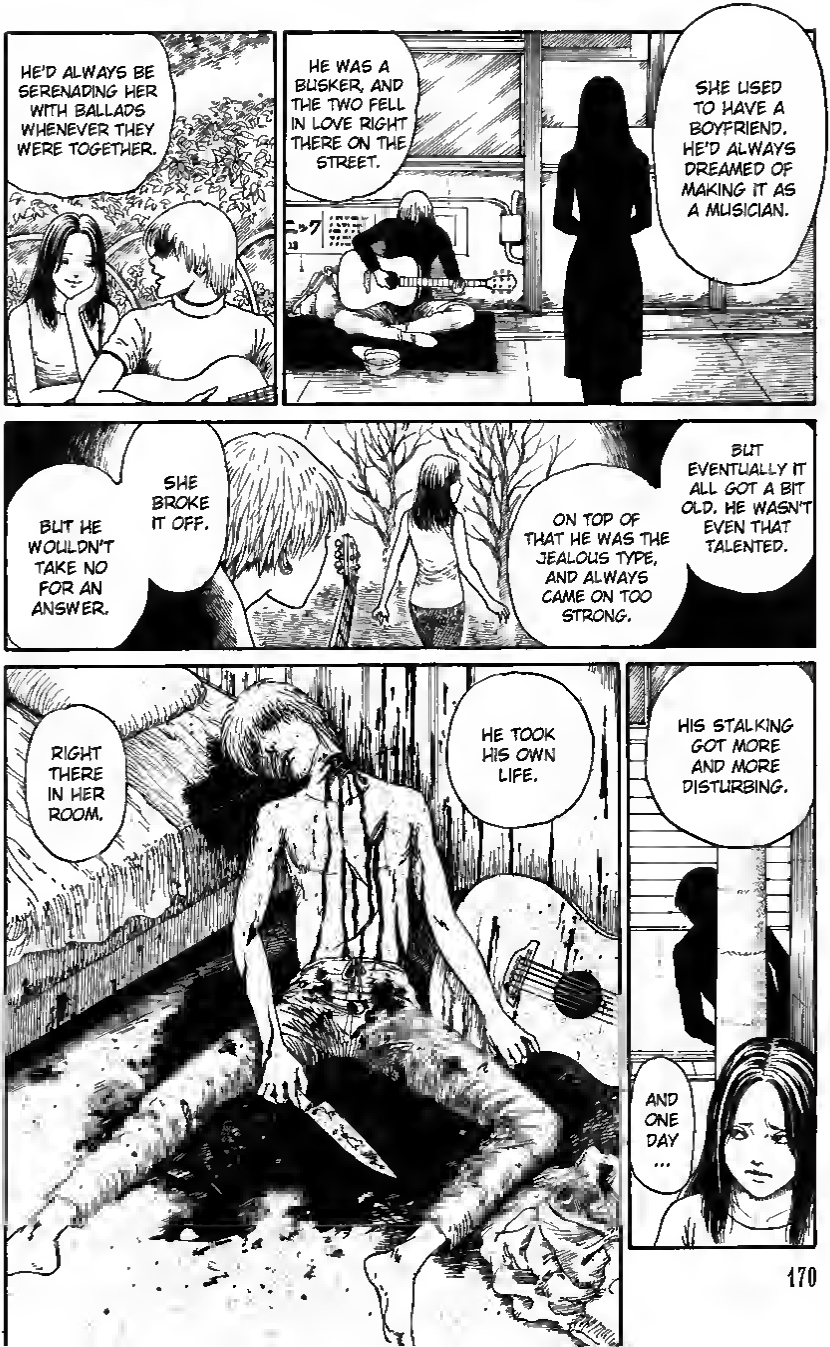
YUU KANADE. EVERYONE'S UNDER HER SPELL, NOW.
...
HER TOO ...
HIM TOO ...
Shaku Sonic Study Labs
...?
...
WHERE THE HELL IS SHE, AND WHAT IS SHE DOING?
THERE'S THIS MANY PEOPLE OUT THERE HURTING
BRRRRMMMM
Shaku Sonic Study Labs
SONIC ... STUDY?

VRMMMMMMMM
VRMMMMMMM
VRRRRRRMMMMMMM
Shaku
Sonic
Study
Labs
click

BUT THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE NOISE IN MY HEAD LATELY.
I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS YOUR SPECIALTY ...
chi
irp
PLEASE CALL ME SHAKU.
WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?
THEY'VE BEEN PROVEN EFFECTIVE AGAINST CEREBRAL TINNITUS.
WE'VE BEEN RESEARCHING VARIOUS TECHNIQUES TO MANAGE THE NOISE IN OUR HEADS.
AH. COULD THIS BE THE 'CEREBRAL TINNITUS' THAT'S BEEN MAKING THE NEWS?
AAAAAAHHHH
WE ARE REACHING A STAGE THAT COULD BE CALLED COMPLETE!
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I BEGAN MY RESEARCH AS EARLY AS LAST YEAR.

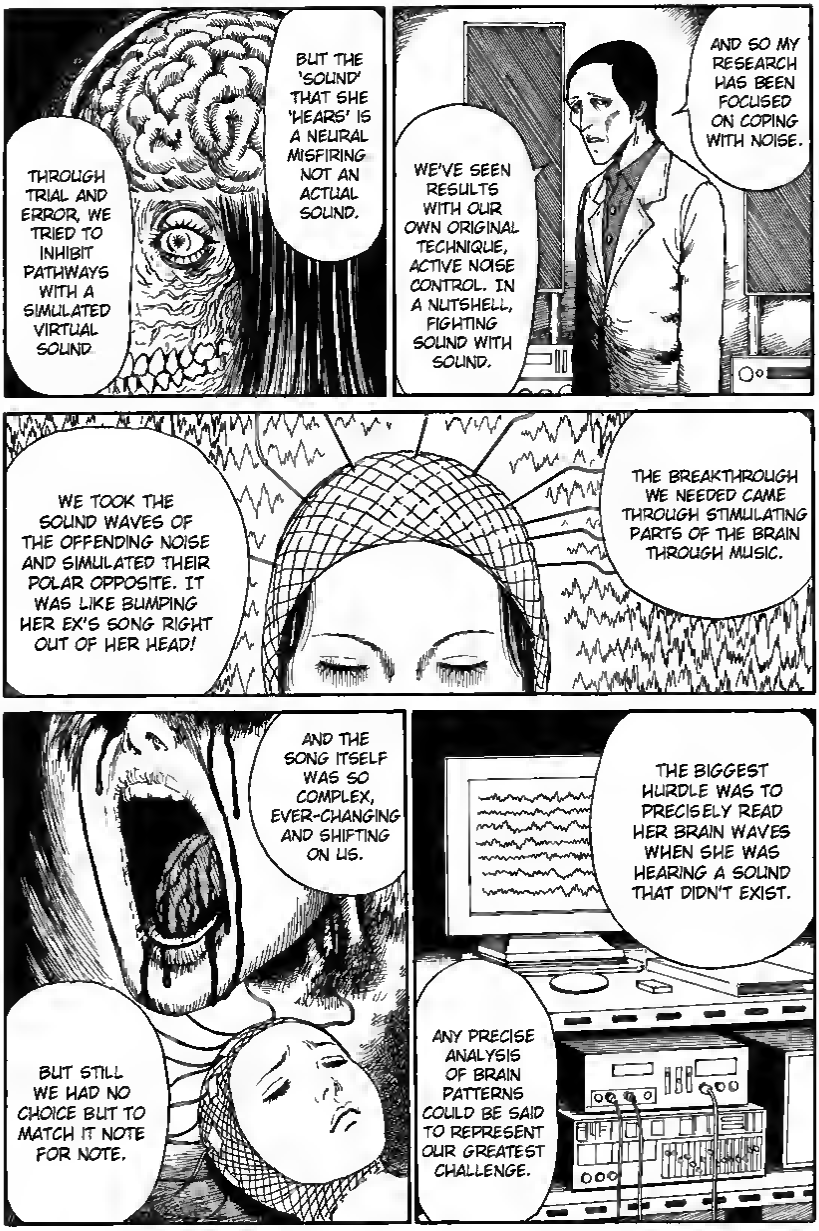
STOP, STOP I HATE YOU ♪ DIE MOTHERFUCKAAARGHHHH ♪
I'VE NEVER HEARD THAT MELODY!
IS THAT RECORDED? NO ...
... YUU ... KANADE?
THAT VOICE ...
PROFESSOR SHAKUUUU
PROFESSORRRRR! PROFESSOR SHAKUUUU! FUCKIN' DO SOMETHIIIIING ♪ ♪
YUU KANADE IS HERE RIGHT NOW?!
THAT'S ... YOU!

THE FIRST TIME SHE CAME TO SEE ME WAS LATE LAST YEAR.
BUT ACTUALLY ..
EVER SINCE HER DISAPPEAR-ANCE, SHE'S BEEN HIDING OUT HERE.
YOUR EARS DON'T DECEIVE YOU. YUU IS HER STAGE NAME THOUGH.
SHE TOLD ME THERE WAS A SONG IN HER HEAD THAT JUST WOULDN'T LEAVE.
EVEN THEN, SHE WAS ALREADY IN CONSIDER-ABLE PAIN.
AND THIS IS HOW IT HAPPENED ...
THAT JUST WOULDN'T STOP, NO MATTER HOW SHE TRIED TO IGNORE IT.
A SONG THAT KEPT RINGING IN HER EARS ...
YES.
WHAT?! BUT THAT'S JUST LIKE ...

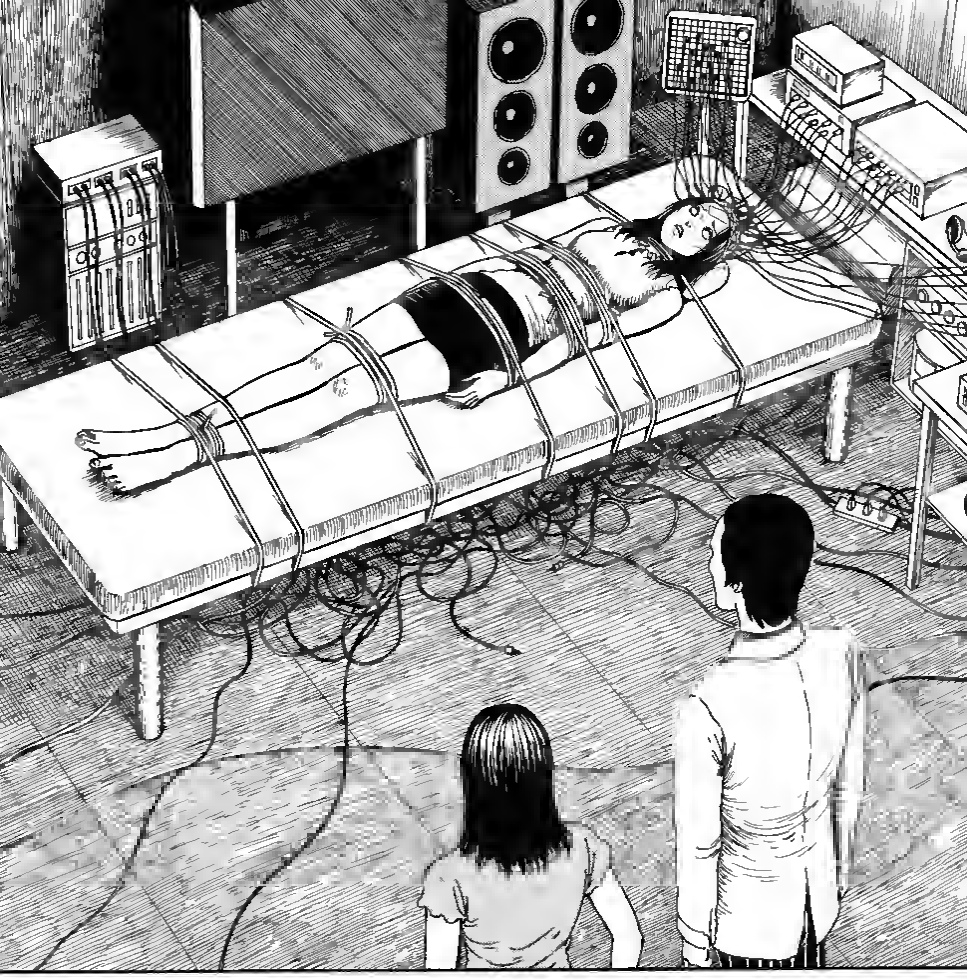

SHE USED TO HAVE A BOYFRIEND. HE'D ALWAYS DREAMED OF MAKING IT AS A MUSICIAN.
HE WAS A BUSKER, AND THE TWO FELL IN LOVE RIGHT THERE ON THE STREET.
HE'D ALWAYS BE SERENADING HER WITH BALLADS WHENEVER THEY WERE TOGETHER.
BUT EVENTUALLY IT ALL GOT A BIT OLD. HE WASN'T EVEN THAT TALENTED.
ON TOP OF THAT HE WAS THE JEALOUS TYPE, AND ALWAYS CAME ON TOO STRONG.
SHE BROKE IT OFF.
BUT HE WOULDN'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER.
HIS STALKING GOT MORE AND MORE DISTURBING.
AND ONE DAY ...
HE TOOK HIS OWN LIFE.
RIGHT THERE IN HER ROOM.

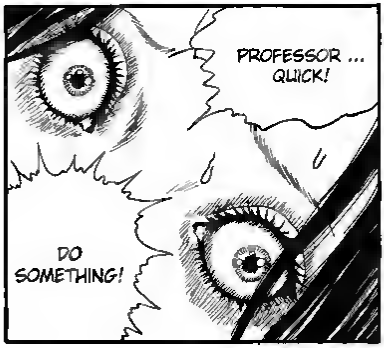
闇の絶唱

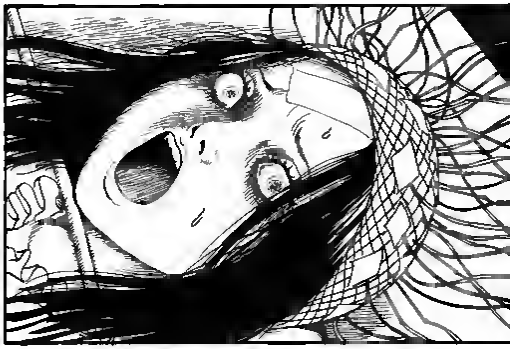
ON THE 49TH DAY AFTER THE INCIDENT, IT STARTED.
ALL OF A SUDDEN, A STRANGE SONG CREPT ITS WAY INSIDE HER HEAD.
IT JUST WOULDN'T LEAVE.
THERE WAS NO IGNORING IT.
SHE COULD PICTURE HIM YELLING IT AT HER FROM THE AFTERLIFE, A NEVERENDING SERENADE.
IT DROVE HER HALFWAY TO MADNESS AND ALL THE WAY TO MY DOOR.
IT WAS ONE OF HIS SONGS.
THE ONE HE WAILED IN HIS LAST DAYS, BEGGING TO GET BACK TOGETHER.

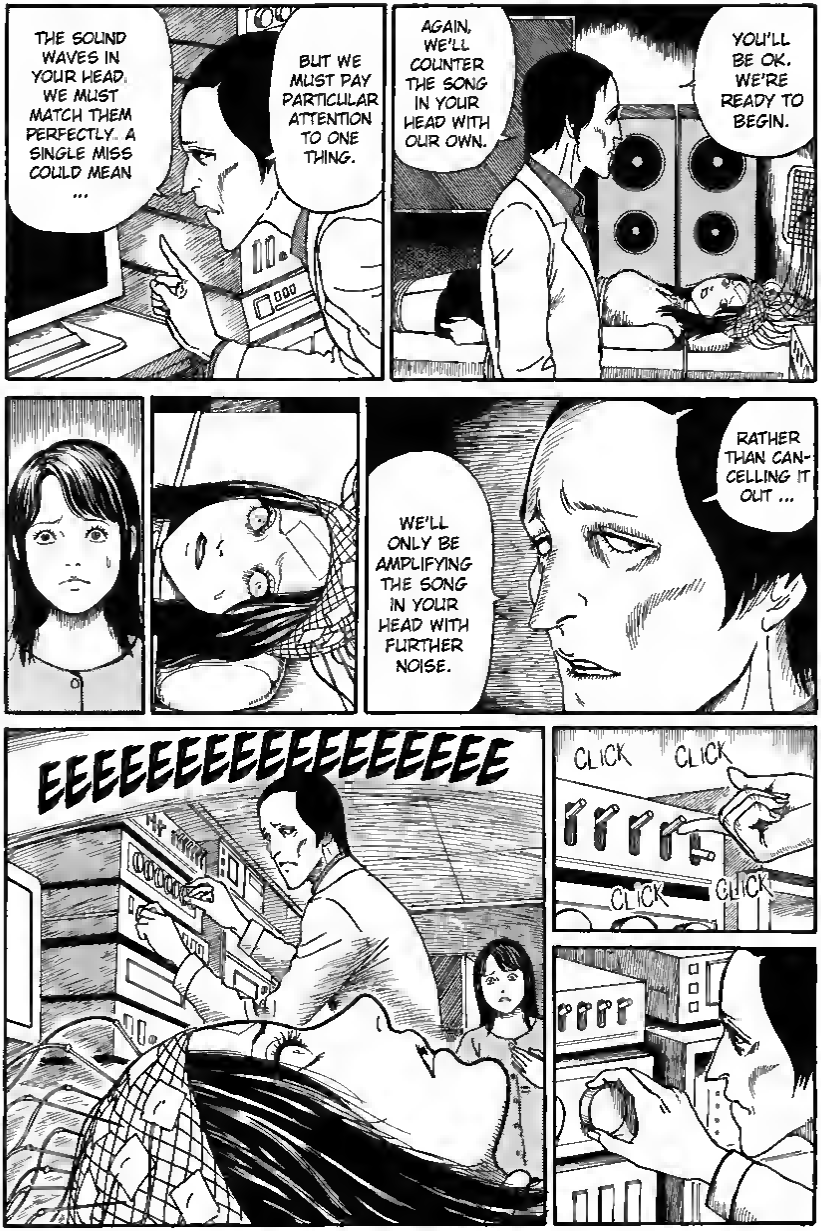

THROUGH TRIAL AND ERROR, WE TRIED TO INHIBIT PATHWAYS WITH A SIMULATED VIRTUAL SOUND.
BUT THE 'SOUND' THAT SHE 'HEARS' IS A NEURAL MISFIRING NOT AN ACTUAL SOUND.
WE'VE SEEN RESULTS WITH OUR OWN ORIGINAL TECHNIQUE, ACTIVE NOISE CONTROL. IN A NUTSHELL, FIGHTING SOUND WITH SOUND.
AND SO MY RESEARCH HAS BEEN FOCUSED ON COPING WITH NOISE.
WE TOOK THE SOUND WAVES OF THE OFFENDING NOISE AND SIMULATED THEIR POLAR OPPOSITE. IT WAS LIKE BUMPING HER EX'S SONG RIGHT OUT OF HER HEAD!
THE BREAKTHROUGH WE NEEDED CAME THROUGH STIMULATING PARTS OF THE BRAIN THROUGH MUSIC.
BUT STILL WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO MATCH IT NOTE FOR NOTE.
AND THE SONG ITSELF WAS SO COMPLEX, EVER-CHANGING AND SHIFTING ON US.
ANY PRECISE ANALYSIS OF BRAIN PATTERNS COULD BE SAID TO REPRESENT OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE.
THE BIGGEST HURDLE WAS TO PRECISELY READ HER BRAIN WAVES WHEN SHE WAS HEARING A SOUND THAT DIDN'T EXIST.

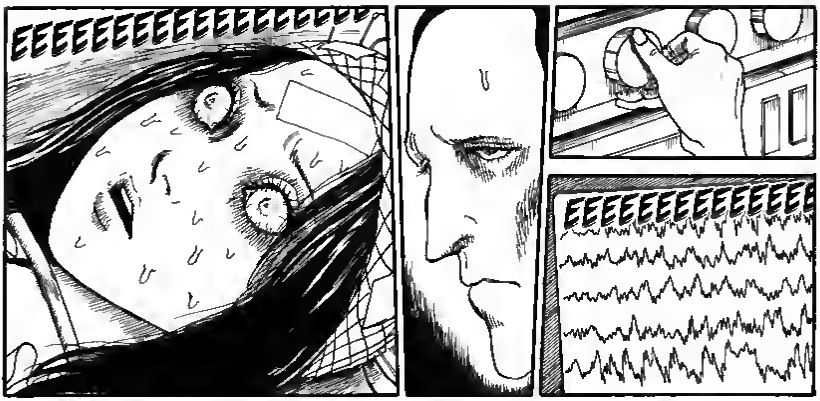
SHE LEFT US STUCK IN THE TRIAL STAGE.
BUT SHE COULD STAND THE PAIN NO LONGER, AND MADE GOOD HER ESCAPE FROM OUR LAB.
OUR STUDY EDGED CLOSER AND CLOSER TO FRUITION.
AND WHEN AT LAST SHE COULDN'T, SHE TURNED UP HERE ONCE MORE.
SHE WAS TRYING TO BLAST AWAY THE NOISE ANY WAY SHE COULD.
I WAS SHOCKED, AND MORESO TO HEAR THAT HER SONG MIRRORED THE ONE WE MADE TO COUNTER HER EX'S.
FOR A WHILE AFTER THAT, SHE APPEARED ALL OVER THE MEDIA AS YUU KANADE.
COME.
crack
WE NOW POSSESS A PROTOTYPE WHICH WILL ERASE THE NOISE THAT AFFLICTS HER. WE'VE JUST HOOKED HER UP.
I KNOW I CAN SAVE HER.

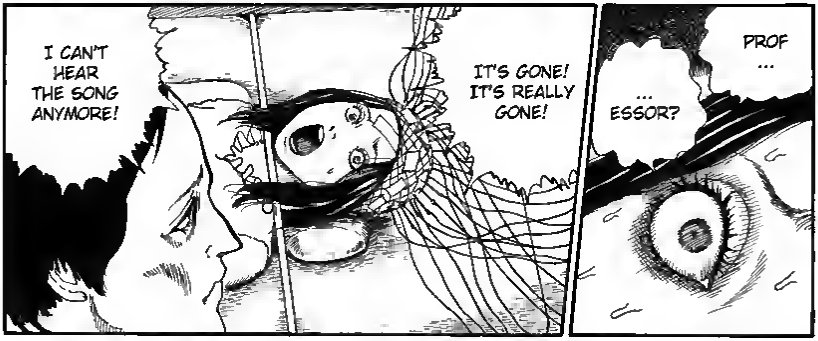


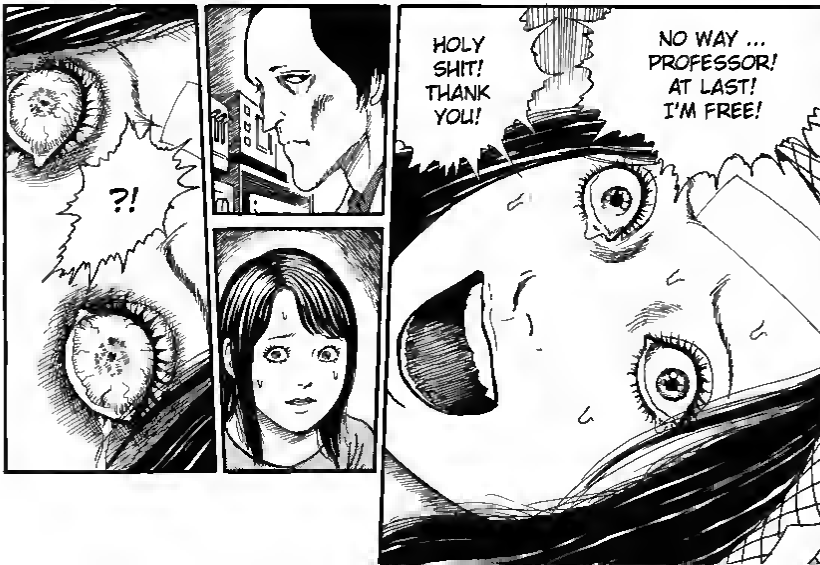

PROFESSOR ... QUICK!
DO SOMETHING!




THE SOUND WAVES IN YOUR HEAD. WE MUST MATCH THEM PERFECTLY. A SINGLE MISS COULD MEAN ...
BUT WE MUST PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO ONE THING.
AGAIN, WE'LL COUNTER THE SONG IN YOUR HEAD WITH OUR OWN.
YOU'LL BE OK. WE'RE READY TO BEGIN.
WE'LL ONLY BE AMPLIFYING THE SONG IN YOUR HEAD WITH FURTHER NOISE.
RATHER THAN CANCELLING IT OUT ...
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK

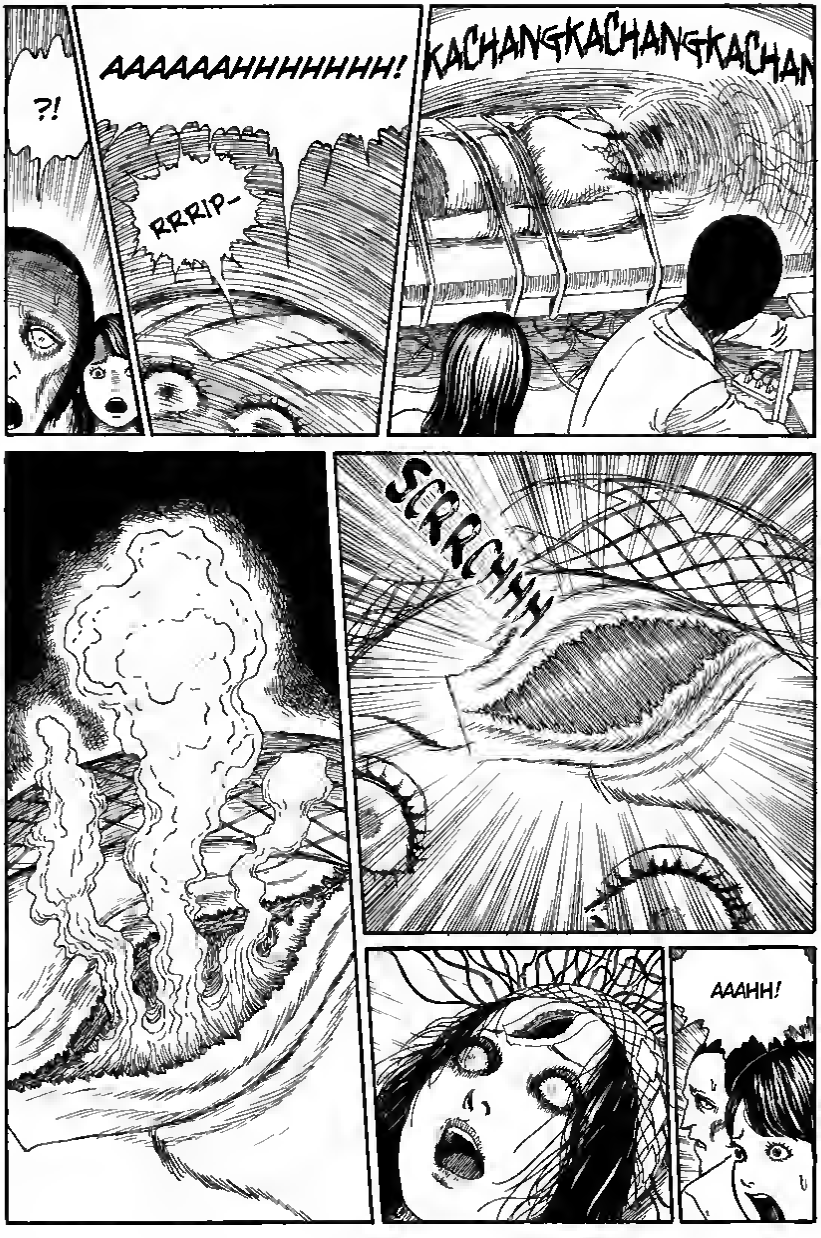

EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE


I CAN'T HEAR THE SONG ANYMORE!
IT'S GONE! IT'S REALLY GONE!
PROF ...
... ESSOR?


?!
HOLY SHIT! THANK YOU!
NO WAY ... PROFESSOR! AT LAST! I'M FREE!

AAAAAAAAAHHH!
UGHH?!
NO! WE CAN'T HAVE MISSED!
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
AAAAAAHH
AAAAAAAHHHHHH!

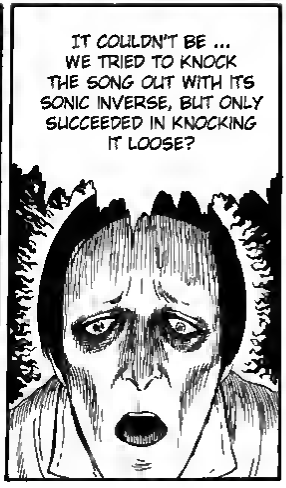
KA-CHANGKA-CHANGKA-CHANG
KA-CHANG KA-CHANG
KA-CHANG KA-CHANG
BUT WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT ARE THESE TREMORS? THE SENSATION OF SOLIND SHOULD BE STRICTLY VIRTUAL!
SHIT! WE HAVE TO CHANGE IT UP!
AAAAA
KACHANG
AAAH
KACHANG
KACHANG


?!
AAAAAAHHHHHHH!
RRRIP-
KACHANGKACHANGKACHAN
SCRRCHHH
AAAHH!

AAAA

I GIVE TO YOU
MY SONG
FOREVER AND EVER
I'M GONNA SING IT
EVEN IF IT KILLS ME
OUT OF THE QUESTION
NEVER LEAVE YOU
AAAAAAAAHHHH
YOU KNOW I LOVED YOU
LA LA LA LA
FOR YOU
I'M HERE
LA LA LA
TO THE
FROM THE BREAK OF DAY
NOAH'S YEAH YEAH

I LOVE YOU SO!
LIKE NO OTHER!!
YEAHHH
BABY
COME BACK
I'M A SING
LA LA LA LA
EVEN WHEN I DIE
YEAAAHHHH
AAAAHHH
MORNING
LATE AT NIGHT
BABY


IT COULDN'T BE ...
WE TRIED TO KNOCK THE SONG OUT WITH ITS SONIC INVERSE, BUT ONLY SUCCEEDED IN KNOCKING IT LOOSE?

SHE'S GONE ...
OOOOH I HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU
YEAH YEAH, I AIN'T GONNA GO
GET OUT, GET OUT, EVEN IF I DIE
MY SONG I GIVE TO YOU
JUST FUCKIN' STOP
STOP, NOOOOO
AAAAAAHHH
THERE'S WORK TO BE DONE.
BUT STILL.

THE END

TRANSLATED BY DANIEL LAU
EDITED BY NAEREID
DANIEL-LAU.COM

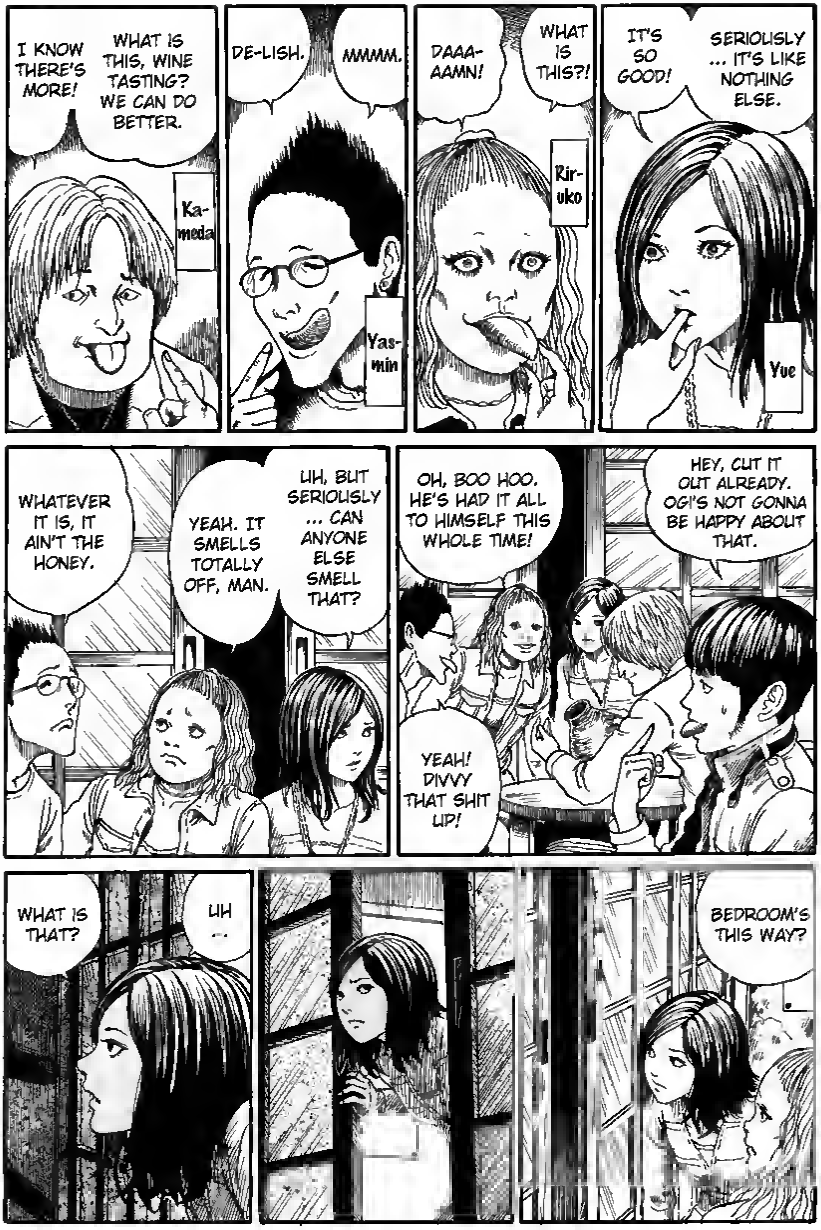
THE JAR'S NOTHIN'. IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE.
DAMN. AND ONLY YOU AND THIS JAR LIVED TO TELL THE TALE, OGI.
IT WAS THAT KINDA TRIP, MAN.
AT ONE POINT I THOUGHT I WOULD NEVER MAKE IT OUTTA THERE.
LET'S START AT THE START, THEN. MY TRIP TO SOUTH AMERICA
SURE YOU WANNA KNOW, SUGIO?
HONEY.
WHICH IS?
... WHAT KINDA HONEY?
THAT'D BE THE JAR YOU GOT THERE.
THEY REALLY ROLLED OUT THE RED CARPET, MAN! EVEN GAVE ME SOUVENIRS TO TAKE HOME.
I WASN'T READY FOR THE JUNGLE, AND GOT MYSELF LOST PRETTY BAD.
I THOUGHT I WAS TOTALLY DONE FOR, WHEN I STUMBLED ONTO SOME TRIBE AND THEIR VILLAGE.

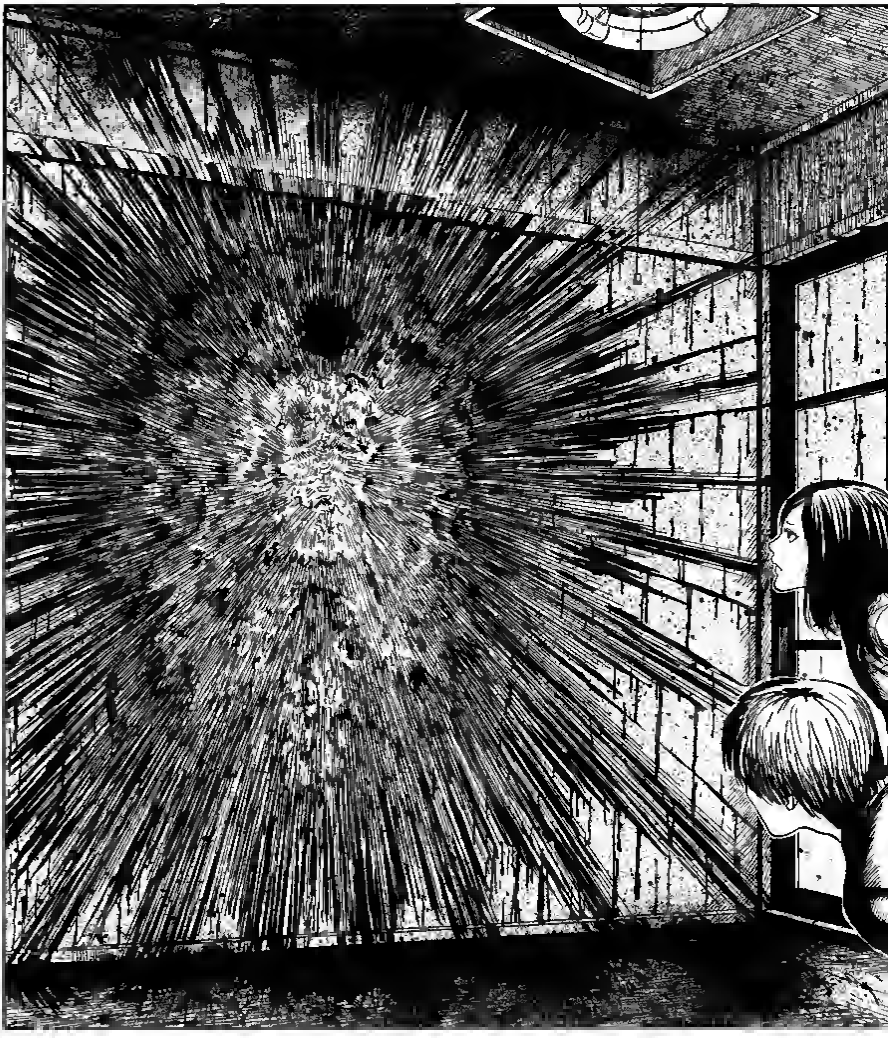
THE NATIVES THERE, THEY EVEN WORSHIP THE PLANTS IT COMES FROM.
SOMETHING LIKE THAT. DUNNO.
HUH? WHAT, LIKE IT GROWS ON THE EDGE OF A CLIFF OR SOMETHING?
APPARENTLY PEOPLE RISK THEIR LIVES TO GO GET IT.
THEY SAID YOU COULD ONLY GET THE HONEY FROM PLANTS NATIVE TO THE REGION.
MMM!
GOD!
AND YOU KNOW WHAT? I TOTALLY GET IT. THIS SHIT IS GODLIKE.
"EAT IT, BUT DON'T GET CAUGHT EATING IT."
JUST A WORD OF WARNING ...
YEAH, DON'T HOG IT.
WANT A LICK?
GODLIKE, YOU RECKON.
HUH.

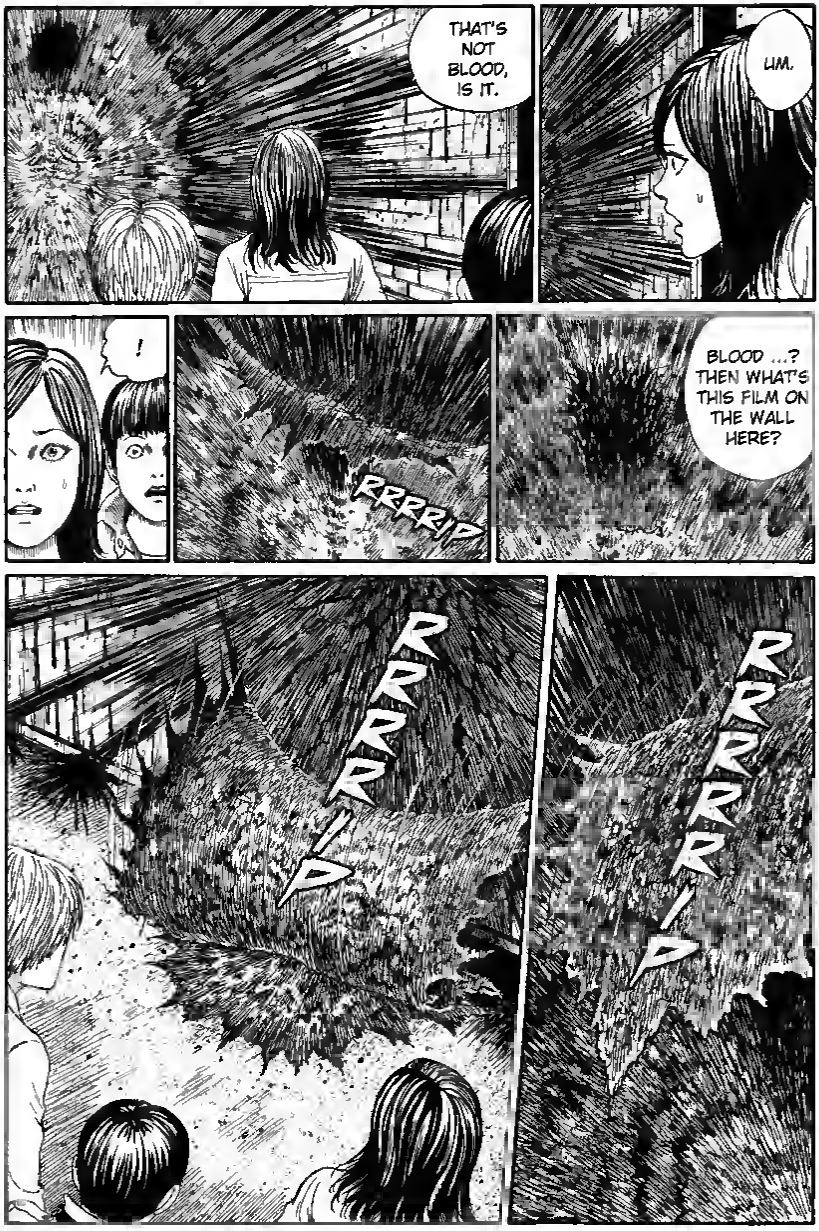
"DON'T GET CAUGHT."
THEY WOULDN'T LET ME GO WITHOUT DRILLING THAT INTO ME, THOUGH.
COULD MEAN YOU DO IT WHEN YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO, AND IT'S BETTER LIKE SMOKES
HAHAHA, SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
... DON'T GET CAUGHT? BY WHO? THE HONEY GODS? THE GRAND FRIGGIN' POOH BEAR?
THAT IS GOOD.
THAT ...
HEY! GO EASY ON THAT!
WOAH ...
NO WAY! THAT'S ALL YOU'RE GETTING!
GIVE US A BIT MORE!
DUDE! THAT'S FLICKIN' AWESOME! GODLIKE!
JESUS! I'VE NEVER HAD ANYTHING LIKE IT!

THANK YOU, COME AGAIN ...
LAWSON
MIGHT STOP FOR A SANDWICH.
NOW I GOT THE MUNCHIES.
OGI ... MAN, WHAT A TIGHTASS ...
THIS IS ONE SHITTY SANDWICH.
NEXT TO THE HONEY, ANYTHING WOULD BE ...
...
munch munch
munch munch
THAT GONNA STOP US? COME ON!
HE AIN'T IN.
YOU THERE, MAN?
BANG
BANG
YO, OGI!!!!!!!
A few days later

WE'RE HERE TO HIT YOU UP FOR SOME OF THAT SOUTH AMERICAN HONEY.
HEY! OGI?
CHILL, SUGI. RELAX.
UH, THIS IS KINDA FUCKED UP, KAMEDA.
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO START THE PARTY WITHOUT OUR GRACIOUS HOST.
HUH. HIS BIKE'S RIGHT OUT THE FRONT.
WE KNOW YOU'RE HERE, MAN!
SUGIO! WHERE'D HE STASH THE HONEY?
DAMN, REEKS IN HERE.
W ... W-WOAH!
FUCK THAT, CRACK IT OPEN.
CAREFUL, THOUGH. HE'LL BE PISSED IF WE TAKE TOO MUCH.
DDDAMN! PASS THAT ROUND!
IN THAT POT OVER THERE.

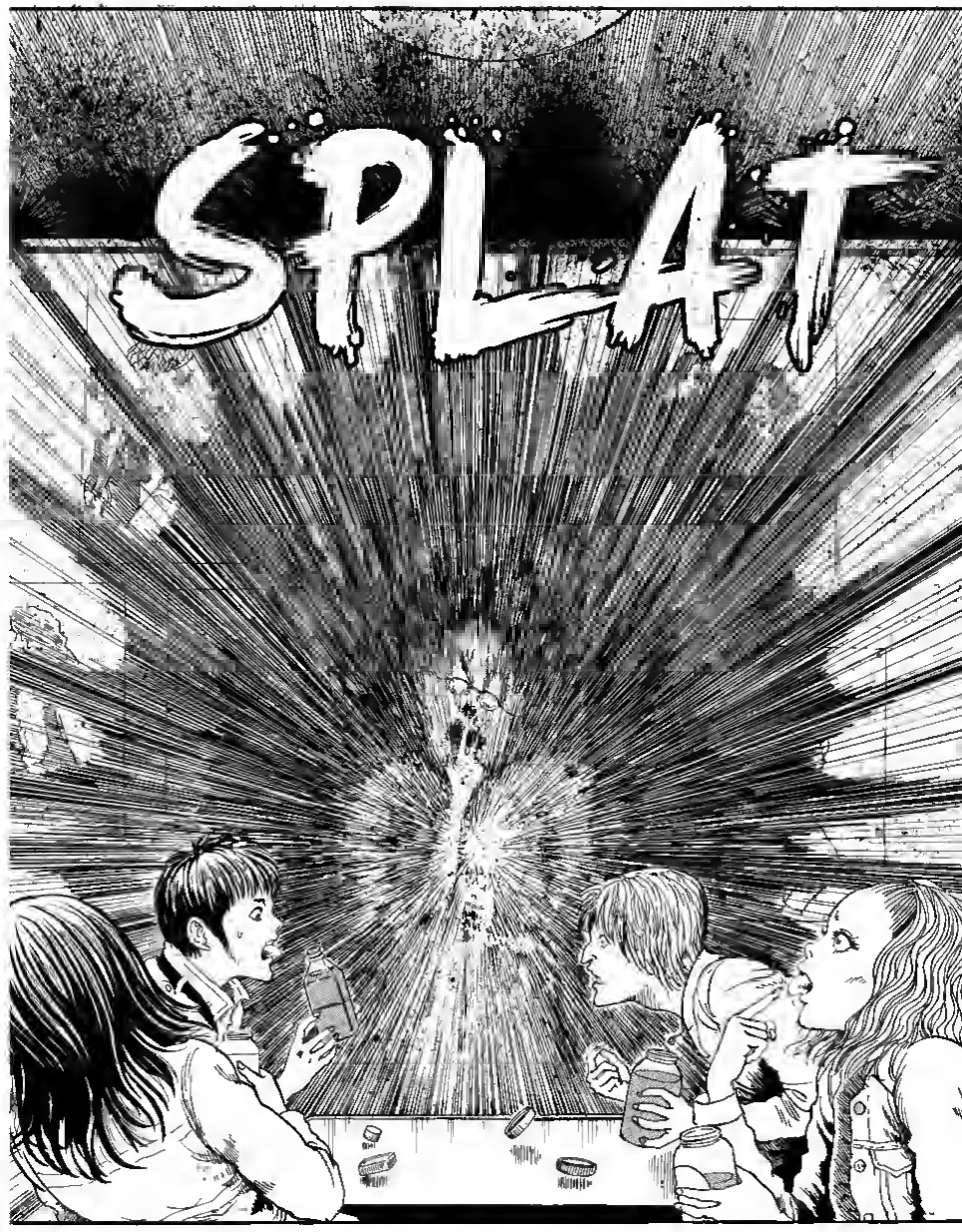

I KNOW THERE'S MORE!
WHAT IS THIS, WINE TASTING? WE CAN DO BETTER.
Ka-meda
DE-LISH.
MMMM.
Yas-min
DAAA-AAMN!
WHAT IS THIS?!
Rir-uko
IT'S SO GOOD!
SERIOUSLY ... IT'S LIKE NOTHING ELSE.
Yue
WHATEVER IT IS, IT AIN'T THE HONEY.
YEAH. IT SMELLS TOTALLY OFF, MAN.
UH, BUT SERIOUSLY ... CAN ANYONE ELSE SMELL THAT?
OH, BOO HOO. HE'S HAD IT ALL TO HIMSELF THIS WHOLE TIME!
HEY, CUT IT OUT ALREADY. OGI'S NOT GONNA BE HAPPY ABOUT THAT.
YEAH! DIVVY THAT SHIT UP!
WHAT IS THAT?
UH ...
BEDROOM'S THIS WAY?


... THE FUCK?
WHAT ...
...


THAT'S NOT BLOOD, IS IT.
UM.
!
RRRRIP
BLOOD ...? THEN WHAT'S THIS FILM ON THE WALL HERE?
RRRRIP
RRRRIP

THERE'S STUFF JUTTING OUT OF IT, LOOKS LIKE BONES.
NO WAY ... SO WHAT'S THIS BIG LEATHERY THING?
AND IT'S WEARING ... CLOTHES ...
IS IT, UH, HUMAN?
WHAT ... IS IT?
CHECK IT OUT. THAT STUFF'S HAIR.
UH ... HOW'D HE GET BLOWN THE FUCK UP LIKE THIS?
YOU TELLING ME THAT'S ... THAT THING'S OGI?
WHAT THE HELL, MAN ...
DUDE. THAT'S OGI'S ... THAT'S OGI'S SHIRT!
HEY, SUGIO! YOU COMIN' OR WHAT!
Y-YEAH. ALL RIGHT ...
FUCKED IF I KNOW, BUT WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE RIGHT NOW.
I DIDN'T SEE NOTHING IF YOU DIDN'T ...

NO WAY. KNOWING HIM, COULD EVEN BE A WEIRD WALL HANGING HE GOT SOMEWHERE.
SERIOUSLY? YOU THINK IT WAS OG!?
DUDE, YOURS IS HUGE.
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE HAS AN EQUAL FIFTH.
THEY'RE ALL THE SAME!
STOP BITCHING, COURSE IT'S FAIR.
HEY, THIS DOESN'T LOOK FAIR.
HAH, LIKE HE WOULD EVEN KNOW.
HE FOUND THIS, WANDERING AROUND SOUTH AMERICA? WHERE?!
GAH! SOOO GOOD!
SERIOUSLY, I'M KINDA GLAD WE STOPPED BY NOW. THE LAST BATCH WAS SO GOOD IT MADE EVERYTHING ELSE BAD.

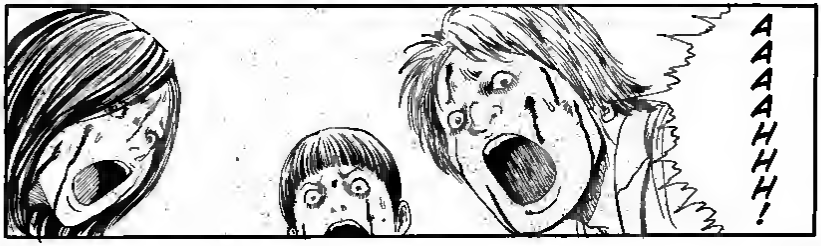

SPLAT

OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD ...
UH, GUYS? WHERE DID YASMIN GO?
- THE FUUUUCK !!!
THERE A GAS LEAK IN HERE?!
JUST LOOK AT HIM!
TH ... THAT'S YASMIN.
WHY ... WHY?! YASMIN, HANG ON MAN!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?!
AAAAAHHH!
NO GOOD ... DUDE'S A GODDAMN PANCAKE.

WAIT. WE FOUND SOMETHING JUST LIKE THIS IN OGI'S APARTMENT.
CALM DOWN ... GOTTA THINK.
...
WHY?
WHY?!
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
... AND WHY ONLY THOSE TWO!
HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED TO OGI AND YASMIN ...
... WAS OGI AFTER ALL.
SO LIKE, THE THING WE FOUND IN OGI'S APARTMENT ...
... SO WHAT'S YOUR GREAT IDEA?! THERE'S A FUCKING HUMAN PANCAKE IN MY ROOM!
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. CAN WE JUST GET OUTTA HERE AND CALM THE FUCK DOWN FIRST?
COPS?! SERIOUS? GO AHEAD, BUT LEAVE ME OUT OF IT.
SCREW THIS. WE GOTTA CALL THE COPS RIGHT NOW.

AND WHY THOSE TWO?!
HOW COULD THIS HAPPEN.
THIS ISN'T HAP-PENING, IT ISN'T ...
THAT HAS TO BE IT ...
NO WAY THIS IS REAL.
WE GOTTA BE TRIPPING.
SHIT YEAH, I COULD GO FOR SOME -
AAAAH, GOD!
THAT WOULD SERIOUSLY SUCK.
YOU TELLING ME THIS HONEY MIGHT NOT BE REAL?
I MEAN, IT'S JUST SO FUCKING GOOD.

SPLAT


AAAAHHH!

... A PANCAKE.
SHE'S A PANC ...
NOT HER TOO ...
RI ... RIRUKO ...
IT'S THE HONEY.
YOU EAT IT, AND THIS IS WHAT YOU GET.
THE NATIVES TOLD HIM THAT WHEN YOU EAT THE HONEY, "DON'T GET CAUGHT".
WAIT. I REMEMBER NOW, OGI TOLD ME SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.
"DON'T GET CAUGHT"?
SERIOUSLY, WHERE DID THEY DO WRONG ...
BUT COME ON, MAN ... WE'VE BEEN EATING IT TOO!
W-WHAT?!
SO DOES THAT MEAN ... WE'RE NEXT?!

THAT'S ALL I GOT.
BUT SLIP UP, AND THEY SPLATTER YOUR SHIT ALL OVER THE PLACE.
MAYBE IF WE DO IT WITHOUT THEM NOTICING WE'RE IN THE CLEAR?
I GOT NO IDEA WHO OR WHAT'S SUPPOSED TO CATCH US ...
NEITHER. BUT THE WAY IT HAPPENS, IT'S LIKE THE WRATH OF GOD, OR SOME EXTRADIMENSIONAL SHIT ...
I DON'T REALLY GET .. THE WHOLE PANCAKE THING ..
OOH, DON'T GET CAUGHT BY THE HONEY GODS!
THEY'LL FUCK YOU UP FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION!
ARE YOU THIS FAR GONE? CAN YOU HEAR YOURSELVES?
AHHH HA HA HA!
HA ... HAHA HA!
...
I'M GOING HOME.
THIS IS TOO MUCH, MAN.

Some weeks later
Restaurant Joyfull
I CAN'T EVEN TOUCH THIS STUFF.
NAH, NO GOOD.
YEAH, SAME ...
MUSH
...
ONLY TWICE ... I WAS GETTING CRAZY WITH-DRAWAL.
...
YUE ... TELL ME YOU'RE NOT GETTING BACK ON THE HONEY. YOU FALLEN OFF THE WAGON?
EVERY-THING ELSE TASTES LIKE SHIT.
EVER SINCE WE FIRST TOOK THE HONEY
BUT YEAH. IT IS GOOD, ISN'T IT.
YEAH ...
MAYBE IT WAS SO GOOD THAT NOW OUR APPETITES ARE SHOT.

I TOTALLY THOUGHT THAT KAMEDA HAD GOTTEN IT.
BUT THE SCARIEST THING WAS THAT THEY WEREN'T THE ONLY ONES. THEY FOUND OTHER BODIES, JUST LIKE 'EM.
SO DID I ... BUT IT WASN'T HIM.
HEY, DID YOU HEAR? RIRUKO AND YASMIN'S BODIES MADE THE NEWS.
YEAH. "THE PANCAKE MURDERS," THEY CALLED IT.
HE PROBABLY FREAKED OUT AND GAVE IT ALL AWAY. I CAN SEE THAT.
BUT DID HE WARN THEM ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN? I DOUBT IT.
THEY WERE SOME BUDDIES OF HIS.
THEY MUST'VE GOTTEN THEIR HANDS ON KAME'S STASH.
LOOKING GOOD, GUYS. HAVE YOU LOST WEIGHT?
SUGIO! YUE! BEEN A WHILE, HUH?

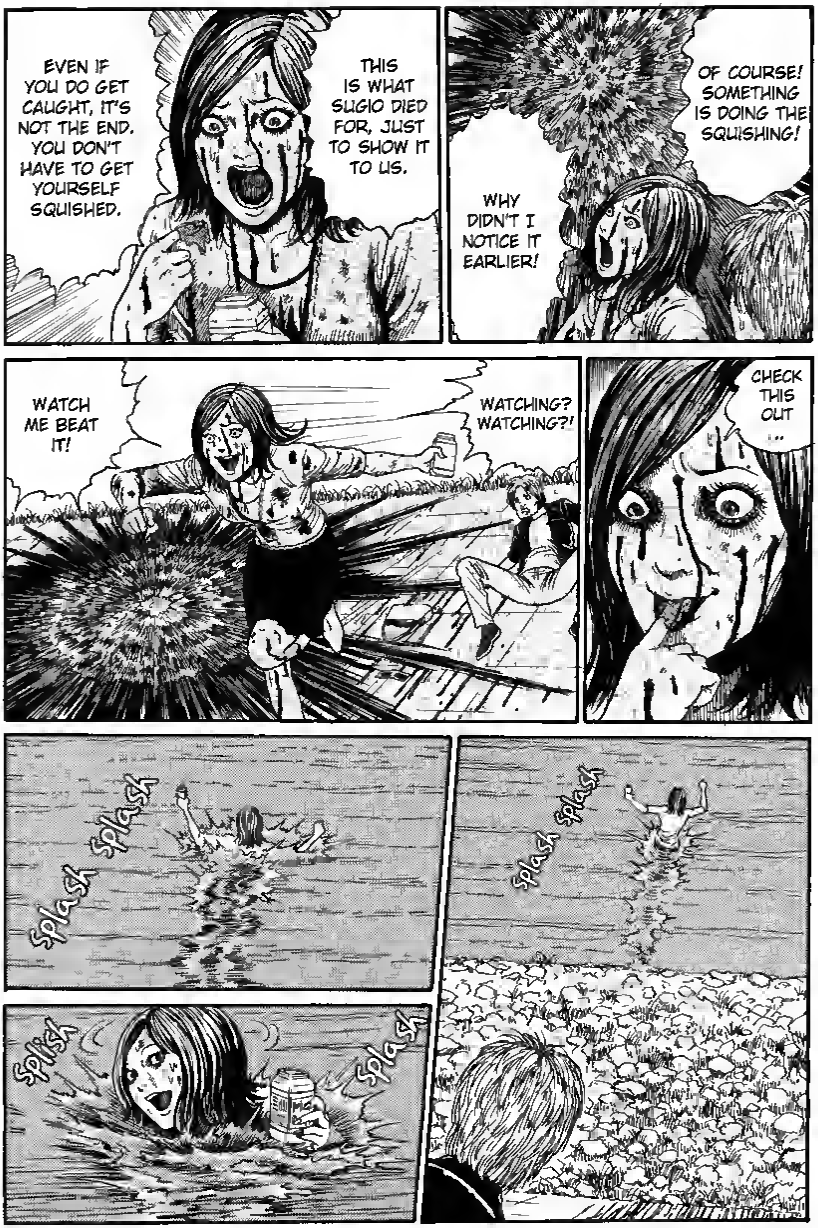
ALSO THE ONLY THING THAT'LL KILL US FLAT.
BUT THIS IS THE ONLY THING WE LIKE NOW.
JUST ONE TASTE OF THIS, AND ...
GAHHH, I'M FUCKING STARVING HERE.
MY ANSWER? FUCKED IF I KNOW.
I TESTED ALL SORTSA WAYS. WHAT ARE DUDES DOING DIFFERENTLY WHEN THEY GET CAUGHT? WHAT ABOUT WHEN THEY DON'T?
HUH?
HOW DO YOU DO IT WITHOUT GETTING CAUGHT?
HERE'S THE THING.
...
THEY WERE BEGGING ME FOR THE STUFF.
COME ON MAN ...
"TEST-ED"?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY ...
YEAH ... NICE.
I DIDN'T LEARN NOTHING, BUT I'M ALMOST FREE AND CLEAR.
THANKS TO THEM, IT'S NEARLY ALL GONE.

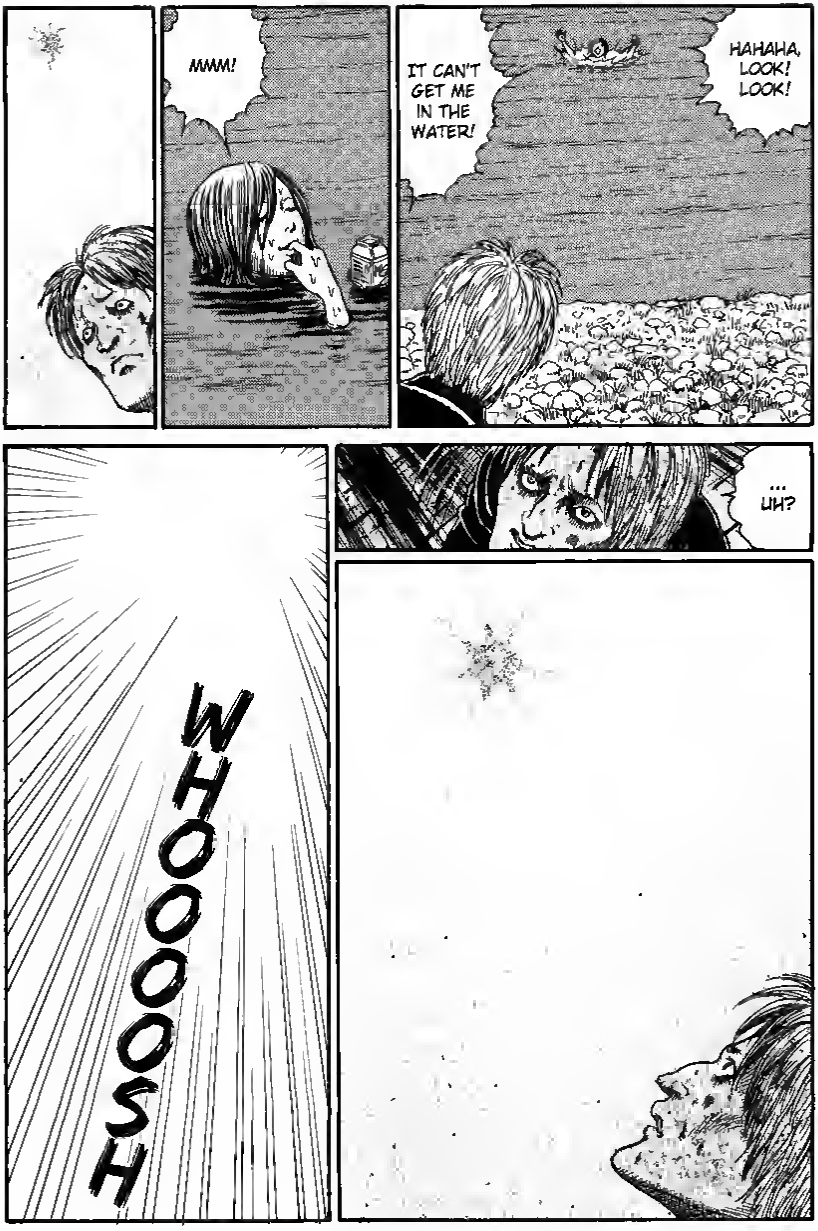
...
YUE ...
I'M GONNA HAVE SOME.
I CAN'T TAKE THIS.
... FUCK IT.
SLRRRP
BA-DUM
DA-DUM

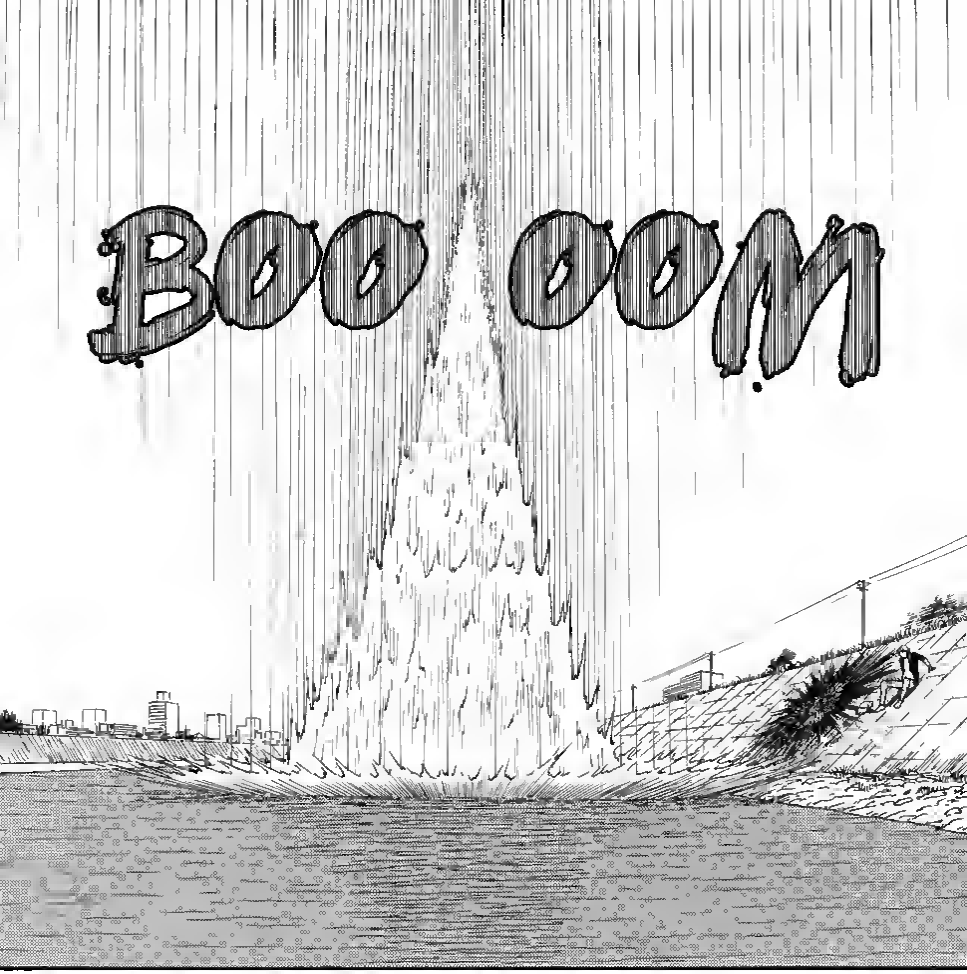
CHATTER CHATTER
CHATTER CHATTER
....
AHHHH.
THAT HIT THE SPOT.
GLUG
GULP
...
I CAN'T WAIT ANOTHER SECOND!
Y-YEAH! FUCK THIS!

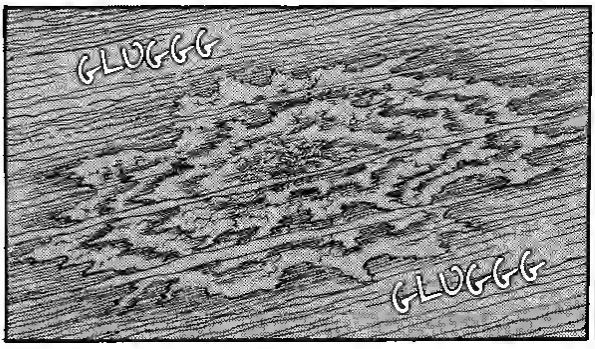
SPLAT

IT WAS SOMETHING BIG! IT CAME OUT AND SQUISHED SUGIO FLAT ...
... WHAT?
SUGIO. SOME-THING SQUISHED HIM.
HEY ... I SAW THAT.
SUGIOOOO!
SUG-IOOOO!
HEY! YUE, BE COOL!
HA HA HA HA HA
HAH!


EVEN IF YOU DO GET CAUGHT, IT'S NOT THE END. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET YOURSELF SQUISHED.
THIS IS WHAT SUGIO DIED FOR, JUST TO SHOW IT TO US.
OF COURSE! SOMETHING IS DOING THE SQUISHING!
WHY DIDN'T I NOTICE IT EARLIER!
WATCH ME BEAT IT!
WATCHING? WATCHING?!
CHECK THIS OUT ...
splash splash
splash splash
splish
splash


MMM!
IT CAN'T GET ME IN THE WATER!
HAHAHA, LOOK! LOOK!
... UH?
WHOOOOOSH

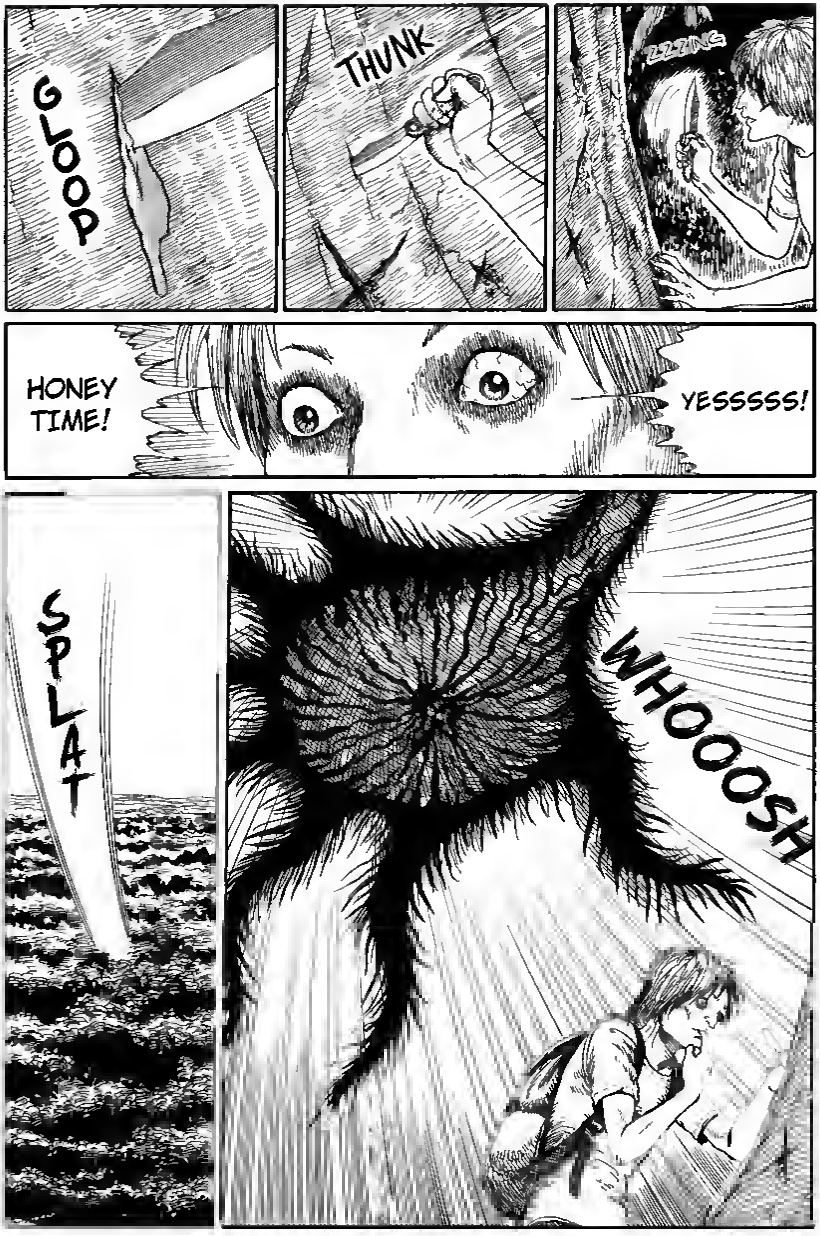

Boo oom


GLUGGG
GLUGGG

splssh
splssh

A WALLET? MUSTA BEEN SUGIO'S.
AHA-HAHA!
HA ... HAHA.
... HEY!
One month later
Somewhere in South America
HHH ARGH!
THERE WAS A BIT OF PAPER IN THAT WALLET THAT HAD TO BE A MAP BACK TO THE HONEY.
AND I'M GONNA BE TAKING HOME AS MUCH AS I CAN CARRY.
BUT CHRIST, THESE MOSQUI-TOES.
THIS TIME, I WON'T FORGET THE WORDS OF THE NATIVES - "DON'T GET CAUGHT."
SPLAT
EEEEEE
OH!
KRSH

REMINDS ME OF A RADAR ANTENNA ...
POP
WOOOSH
THE ... THE HELL KINDA PLANT IS THAT?
IT LOOKS SO ALIVE. THE BRANCHES ARE GOING APESHIT.
WOOOSH
HEY - THERE IT IS AGAIN.
POP
NAH, CAN'T BE ..
WOAH! DID THAT BRANCH JUST DISAPPEAR?
WHATEVER SMELL THAT. IT'S THE HONEY SMELL, COMING RIGHT OFF THIS TREE
THIS MUST BE THE MOTHERLODE!
WHAT IS THIS THING ... THE BRANCHES JUST KEEP COMING AND GOING.
WHERE IS IT THAT THEY 'GO'?



THE END

AFTERWORD

Voices in the Dark was my first new collection in a long while. So why did the followup take three years to complete? There are a few reasons, but chief among them would be suffering a decline in health. Coming up on twenty years of drawing, and this right hand just doesn't have the power it used to. It could be inflammation, but it's more like a chronic ache. As you can see, my production rate has slowed, and there are more than a few parts here that were incomplete during their initial run, that I've ended up redrawing for this collection. I won't tell a lie, I still loathe the idea of getting older.

Still, the only way I can make up for that is to work even harder.

With my drawing still far from perfect, not to mention my writing, there's still so much I have to learn.

My editor this time again has been Mr. Harada, to whom I owe so much. My thanks go out to him, as well as an invitation to tackle a full length story together next time.

Junji Ito
October 2006

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

I'm writing this on my birthday, there's a nagging pain in my wrist and I hear Mr. Ito about getting older. But with this translation coming four years after the fact, we need only do a cursory check to see that he kept his promise. He's been very prolific since he wrote that afterword and our next project will be something from his output since then.

Junji Ito shows no signs of stopping and that's an inspiration to me to do the same, much like the stories in these two volumes have been an inspiration to laugh, gag, or stare agape at just what on earth is going on.

Thank you for reading, and thanks to editor naereid for making this volume as pretty as anything on the shelves.

Daniel Lau
March 2010

EDITOR NOTE

As a big Ito fan, for years I was quite disappointed with how little of his work was actually translated to English. So naturally, Daniel's efforts thrilled me and made me want to help out. This is my first serious foray into the world of scanlations, but if there's one thing shoujo manga has taught me, it's that the power of love overcomes everything, baby!

And indeed, being a part of this has proved just as wonderful as I thought it would. Long live Junji Ito and Daniel Lau!

naereid
March 2010

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